

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE.

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ON THIS SIDE.

I.
ONE day in the spring of 1878, Mr. Job Ketchum, of the firm of Ketchum & Richardson, brokers, Kalsing, Michigan, came down to his office an hour earlier than was his custom, in order, as he told his wife, that he might "buckle down to his work and get things ship-shape again," which was his way of saying that he meant to attack the business and correspondence that had accumulated in an absence of six weeks from home. Arrived there, he seated himself before a large desk abounding in pigeon-holes and strewn with papers, energetically unlocked three drawers in turn, glanced into and relocked them, and then looked about him, uncertain where to begin when there was so much to be done at once. His clerk, a sharp-faced young fellow, who had greeted him familiarly on his entrance in high-pitched, nasal tones, now approached, picked up a letter from a heap on the desk, perched himself on a table close by, swung his feet idly, and with a rasping laugh called attention to certain peculiarities in the envelope and address of the document in his hand.

"Here's a communication from one of your fine British friends," he said, "postmarked Leemington, Wahwickshire." (Pronounced in a broadly American fashion, that would have puz-

zled an inhabitant of the town in question not a little.) "Big seal, with some tomfoolery or other on it, and addressed, as sure as my name is Tom Price, to 'J. Ketchum, Esq., Kalsing, Colorado, Michigan!' There's an idiot for you, full-blown."

"I don't believe it. Give it here!" exclaimed his employer, holding out his hand for the letter; then, recognizing the handwriting, he could but smile a little to find the accusation true and have fresh evidence that English haziness about America is pretty much now what it was when Mr. Joseph Ball, barrister, of London, used to send voluminous epistles across the Atlantic to his beloved nephew "Major George Washington, at the Falls of the Rappahannock, or elsewhere in Virginia."

"Queer," commented Mr. Ketchum, "they—" Here he looked up, caught the look of impudent triumph on his clerk's face, and broke off to say, "Not that it's any business of yours, Tom Price, that I can see. I don't take much interest in your wash-list to speak of, and I'll thank you to leave my letters alone in future. Perhaps you may have heard of the man who made a large fortune by attending strictly to his own affairs. You are as sharp as a steel-trap about most things, but you've got no more notion of being a gentleman than a pig has of being a gazelle."

"Oh, pshaw! I guess I'm as much of a gentleman as most," replied Mr. Price, not at all offended, his amiability being as invincible as his vulgarity. "And I don't care if I ain't," he added frankly. "I don't see that it would put anything in my pocket. What are you so mad about, anyway? Correspondin' with high and mighty Britishers don't agree with you. Pity you can't teach 'em a little geography; but I suppose they're above learnin' it."

"I suppose you are good at it, now, ain't you?" asked the artful Mr. Ketchum, in a voice full of flattering suggestion.

"I believe you," was the prompt response; and Mr. Price got down and swaggered around the office with his hands in his pockets. "Before I was six years old I knew the capital of every State in the country, and most of the rivers and big towns. I knew Colorado wasn't in Michigan before I cut my first tooth. I never heard of such disgraceful ignorance in all my born days,—never!"

"Well, if you know so much about geography, suppose you just tell me where Yorkshire is," said Mr. Ketchum, coming to the point.

"Yorkshire?" stammered Mr. Price, blushing furiously and taken suddenly quite out of his depth. "Yorkshire? Yorkshire? Why, it is in Scot—no, England, to be sure," he said boldly, his shrewd eyes fixed on his employer's face.

"That was pure guess-work," commented Mr. Ketchum mercilessly.

"Well, what part of England?"

"Why, it's in the south—" (here Mr. Ketchum nodded affirmatively) "western,—that is to say, eastern part, ain't it?" hazarded Mr. Price slowly.

"No, it ain't!" exclaimed Mr. Ketchum. "You get you a map of England, young man, and don't you talk any more about ignorance until you have studied it a little and are better posted. You had better sing small about geography for a while. Because you've lit your little tallow candle and got twenty feet or so into the tunnel, don't you go supposing

that you know all about the bowels of the earth. Put that in your pipe and smoke it. Lay it down as a fixed fact, Tommy, that what you don't know is a good deal more remarkable than what you do, and that running up three columns at a time is pretty smart, but it isn't squaring the circle."

Mr. Price muttered something to the effect that nobody knew or cared to know anything about such an out-of-the-way place; but he was as nearly abashed as it was possible for him to be, and it was some time before the flush died out of his thin face, as he bent over a ponderous ledger. Not to be "posted" was acutely humiliating to him, for he prided himself upon being habitually in that mysterious state of knowingness which is not culture, but a substitute for it with men of his calibre; and his discontent finally took shape in a determination to change his subscription from the local newspaper to a New York daily of repute. As for Mr. Ketchum, he leaned back in his chair, not ill pleased with his share in the late discussion, one of many such into which he was continually being drawn, and in which he felt obliged to sustain the rôle of champion of all England, partly because he was a better judge of international questions than most of his countrymen and liked to see fair play, and partly from love and loyalty to his wife, a shy, timid little Englishwoman, who never took up the cudgels for her native land, no matter how preposterous the statements made about it, but only rolled her eyes beseechingly at her husband, as much as to say, "Dear Job, do you hear them? Do tell them it isn't true at all."

Thus inspired, it is no wonder that Mr. Ketchum grew quite eloquent in defence of English institutions sometimes, and rather against his convictions was silent at others. But, at the same time, he did not develop the faintest symptom of Anglomania, as a weaker man would have done. There was no change in his dress, speech, or habits, and when he went to England he became at once the champion of all Amer-

ica, showed the most ardent patriotism, and in all places and companies was a national standard-bearer, defending republican institutions with immense spirit, if somewhat whimsically, and gaining the respect even of those who differed from him most widely and radically.

Mr. Ketchum had no sooner made himself acquainted with the contents of his letter than he sprang out of his chair, seized the morning paper, looked at the shipping-news, made a rapid mental calculation, and put himself at the telephone, which was hardly invented before he had adopted it (connecting his house and office, for one thing) and subscribed for all the shares he could get. In a little while he succeeded in establishing communication with his wife, thanks to his masterly use of an instrument which requires a full half-hour of "Hello!" and "What's that?" treatment before it can be induced to repeat the simplest message for most people.

It was:

"Is that you, Daisy? Are you there?"

"Yes, love. It is I."

"Good news for you, Mrs. K. I have just had a letter from Sir Robert Heathcote, saying that he is on his way to this country with his nephew, another fellow, coming out here to settle, and some women-folks,—your cousin among them."

Mrs. K., evidently aghast: "Dear me! Is *she* coming? Only fancy!"

"Not fancy at all, my dear, but a melancholy fact. She—they will all get in to-morrow."

"You don't mean it! Are they coming out West?" (plaintively.)

"Yes, of course."

"Then you might ask them to stop over from the Saturday until the Monday, if they come this way."

Mr. K., energetically: "From Saturday until Monday? Why, Daisy Ketchum, I wonder you ain't ashamed to say such a thing! As if I'd do such a thing, especially to people who have come three thousand miles and very

likely been sea-sick the whole way! I wonder at you! I thought I had cured you of all that 'Saturday-until-Monday' business. We might ask them to stop and take a glass of water with us as they cross the continent, if you are bent on being hospitable."

Mrs. K., answering the accusation made against her by implication: "It isn't that; but you know what a piece of business it is to entertain my cousin. She will give more trouble than the Emperor of Germany could and all his suite, and she will not care for America a bit; and how on earth shall we amuse her? I don't like her, and I don't want her, and that is the truth, dear."

"With the bark on. No more do I; but she is in the country, and it won't do not to ask her, especially as she is with friends of ours."

Mrs. K., with resignation: "Perhaps you are right, dear. She'll have to come. Awful nuisance! Ask them, then, for a week."

"A month, you mean."

Mrs. K., desperately: "Job, if you ask her for a month I shall be quite wretched."

"I can't make it less. A month at least, Mabel."

Mrs. K., submissively: "Very well, dear. You know best. As you please."

"I please to make it three weeks, then, good child."

"Thank you. Three weeks of my cousin is equal to a cycle of anybody else. How she will hate America!"

Mr. Ketchum whistles a few bars of Yankee Doodle defiantly, and then says, "Hear that?"

"Yes."

"There are several lines of steamers plying between this country and Europe, I believe."

"I wish she was going home in one of them, instead of coming out."

"Now, Mabel, don't worry. I'll take the whole thing off your shoulders, and get a housekeeper and order everything from New York in first-rate style."

"Is Mr. Price there?"

"No, he has just gone out." (Fright-

ful fib on Mr. Ketchum's part, and the two men exchange glances.)

"Then here's a kiss for the dearest husband in the world! Do come up to breakfast soon,—stewed kidneys and buttered toast!"

"All right. I'll be up directly,—as soon as I have answered Sir Robert's letter. And Mr. Price hasn't been out at all, Daisy."

A faint, indignant "Oh, Job! How could you?" and the telephone closed.

Mr. Ketchum was late for breakfast, after all, but explained his detention satisfactorily: "I sent Sir Robert a batch of letters of introduction,—one to the Browns,—and promised and vowed in your name that you would write to your cousin by the first mail to say that you were pining for a sight of some English relative in your miserable American home."

"You are not in earnest? Surely you didn't say that?" Mrs. Ketchum queried, rather anxiously, for she was a very literal person, and was never quite certain whether her husband spoke in jest or earnest.

"Well, you will find it safer not to take *all* my remarks at their face value," was his reply. "You ought to have heard Tom Price trying to pump me this morning about the party. He's got curiosity enough to set up a dozen villages and two dozen convents. He'll not close an eye now until he finds out every single blessed mortal thing about every one of them. He asked Richardson what he gave for his new carriage, and got no satisfaction; that was six months ago; and, if you believe me, he no sooner saw him come in to-day than he stepped up to him and said, 'You needn't have been so close about that carriage of yours. I've found out all about it. It isn't new at all. It's second-hand, and you gave four hundred and thirty dollars for it, and forty more to have it done over.' You ought to have seen Richardson's face. He could have bit a ten-penny nail in two; not that he cared so much about that, but it's everything. If he steps into a restaurant to take a dozen oysters, there

is Tom. If he goes into a bar-room, Tom mentions it at the dinner-table,—Tom is his wife's brother, you know, and lives with them. If he buys a new suit, Tom finds out what he gave for it; likewise cigars, buggy-drives, and treats of all kinds. If he owes any money, Tom knows about that. In fact, there's nothing he don't know. Not that he has camped on Richardson's trail, but just because he is a born detective and would cross-question a corpse if he got the chance. He is a calamity on casters. Richardson isn't an ornament of the Young Men's Christian Association exactly, or superintendent of a Sunday-school, and hates being dogged around like poison; but he might as well try to escape Death as Thomas J."

"His sister Lucy is not at all a nice person, I think," commented Mrs. Ketchum.

"Oh, I can't stand her at all. She is nine distinct varieties of born fool, and would talk the ears off a brass monkey. He has sense, at least, and is a good-hearted chap, as easy to get on with as an old shoe. I don't mind telling him when I had the measles, and what I paid the doctor, and how old my grandmother was that nursed me, and what her maiden name was, and her husband's name, and the names and sex of all her children, and how well off she was left, and a few dozen other things, unless I happen to be busy, and then I give him a file to gnaw, pretty quick."

Mrs. Ketchum was accustomed to her husband's way of putting things, but was now listening to him with the ears of her English cousin.

"Dear Job," she said, "how you do talk! What curious expressions you use!"

"What do you mean? I talk like other men, don't I?" he said quickly. "I haven't taken out a patent for it, at any rate. I know what you mean. You mean that I don't talk like an Englishman. Don't you?" he demanded, with some asperity.

Mrs. Ketchum colored violently, and then said gently but honestly, "Yes, dear. Don't be vexed at my thinking

that. I don't really wish you to be different in anything from what you are."

"Well, it is lucky that you don't," he replied, his face relaxing, but his tones still emphatic, "at least as far as making an imitation Englishman of myself is concerned. I was born an American, and I expect, with the blessing of heaven and the permission of the court, to live and die one. Not that I don't like the English, and respect them, too. Any sensible man with a level head is bound to do the last, whether he does the first or not, and it's all nonsense Americans being down on them. It is true that they made the mistake for a while of giving us two fingers when we were holding out both hands with our hearts in them; but they know better now, and it is stupid to harp any longer on that old string. They are fine, brave fellows, and tell the truth thirteen times in the dozen, and if they are not our relations I don't know where we are to look for any, for my part. I don't want any Frenchmen or Italians in mine, thank you. It is my belief that the Lord has divided the footstool between us and asked us to stand sponsors for the human race. But all the same, when I see some of those fellows in the East, with their plaid suits that it would take two men to show the pattern, and their side-whiskers, and their umbrellas, and bath-towels pinned around their hats, hawhawing and swelling around, hoping to be mistaken for Englishmen or anything but Americans, I swear I'd give my Susquehanna preferreds if I could put every mother's son of them to rounding up cattle out on my Colorado ranch for ten years, until they came to their senses. There's Sam Bates, now,—Sam's last is to call the whole of this continent outside the city of New York 'the provinces'! I asked him when the king his father was going to make him governor-general of them, but the gump only simpered and looked as if I had paid him a compliment."

"Is he a New-Yorker?"

"No—o! Not any more than I am a South-Sea Islander. He was born and

raised right here in Tecumseh. His father had no frills. He was as good an old grocer as ever sanded sugar, took to shaving notes, made a pile which Sam got and spends in 'Noo York,' as he calls it, and was gathered about ten years ago. Pity old Bates can't see how it's going: he'd regret ever having made a dime. A fortune is like a razor, and, unfortunately, parents never can tell whether a son will shave with it or cut his throat. I hope that youngster of ours, Daisy, will turn out a man, and not a monkey or any other sort of brute."

Mrs. Ketchum, as proud possessor of the dearest and downiest little baby in the world, was quite shocked by this speech, and said decisively, "Of course he will. How can you doubt it, dear? You ought not to speak so harshly of Mr. Bates. Perhaps he is just naturally a foolish sort of creature."

"Well, I do try to remember that the Lord made him, but he is certainly one of heaven's light-weights. I'll try not to square at him any more than I can help, though."

With this concession the meal closed; indeed, for Mr. Ketchum it had practically come to an end some time before, for the most elaborate dinner never occupied his attention for more than twenty minutes, the simpler meals an incredibly short time; and after having taken what he wanted it was usually his custom to walk about the room while his wife calmly and leisurely attended to all her little duties,—slowly poured out her tea, chipped away at her egg more slowly still, and ate slowest of all, wholly uninfluenced by his restlessness. He would stop for a moment, sometimes, to watch, with a bantering twinkle in his eye, the calm movements of her pretty, white, be-ringed fingers and tell her that "three-score years and ten was all she could count upon, though there was Thomas Parr, to be sure." And she would smile, and say that "one must breakfast comfortably," and assure him that it was "quite unnecessary to fidget about so, time saved not always being time gained." But neither ever succeeded in either

accelerating or retarding the natural pendulum that ticked so busily and incessantly in his case, with such long, reposeful swing in hers.

Being in a talkative mood on this particular morning, Mr. Ketchum grew reminiscent over his cigar, and had a great deal to say about Cheltenham, the beautiful English town in which he had met and married his wife, the people he had known there, and so on by natural transition to their expected guests, for whom, in American fashion, he was willing to put himself out to any extent, anxious only that they should see and enjoy as much as possible, and generously ready to meet any and every demand that might be made upon his time or purse. As for trouble, he was quite willing to take that, too, but all unconsciously, the word being either left out of the American host's Webster Unabridged or translated as pleasure.

It was not often that the husband and wife got such a long, quiet talk, for reasons that will presently be explained.

When he finally discovered how late it was, he exclaimed, "This ain't business much, but I have enjoyed it. We are not exactly wretched without our old ladies, are we, now? I wonder if they wouldn't like a trip to California or Cuba some time? Good-by, Daisy. See that Frawlein gets her beef-tea at twelve."

This is clearly the place to make the reader acquainted with all the persons just mentioned, and to explain their connection with the Ketchums. When Mr. Ketchum transplanted his English daisy from the meadows of Gloucestershire to his native prairies, he felt in duty bound to offer the same advantage to the parent-root, which he thought must otherwise pine and droop, forlorn and miserable, away from its fair little flower. To drop metaphor, he thought himself the natural guardian and protector of his wife's widowed mother, and as a simple matter of course asked her to make her home with him. From the moment she came under his roof he treated her with the indulgence which alone was possible to him in any inti-

mate relation with women, and for a whole year that lady revelled in a luxurious suite of apartments set apart for her exclusive use, her own carriage and servants, and the belief that she would sooner or later get entire control of her daughter's establishment. At the end of that time Mr. Ketchum brought his own mother home, for reasons as obvious and natural, and installed her on the same floor, across the hall, with exactly the same privileges, indulgences, and comforts.

He congratulated himself upon this arrangement very much, if a little prematurely.

"Your ma has had a hard life of it, and so has mine," he said to his wife; "and they are both getting old, and I am determined that they shall have everything they want. I've got plenty to do it with, and we'll just all live along together here as snug as sardines. I ain't a-going to make any difference between them, down to a paper of pins, and I know you ain't the woman to do it either."

In accordance with these views, Mr. Ketchum gave both ladies exactly the same allowance of pin-money, christened them facetiously "Mother and T'other," put one on his right hand and one on his left at table, and behaved with the most absolute fairness and the most admirable kindness in everything, from the greatest to the smallest question that came up. Mabel, who loved and admired her husband's generosity, imitated it as well, and never was there less room given for jealousy or heart-burning in any household that was ever organized. Mr. Ketchum himself saw to their comforts,—their bedroom fires, port, steaks, tonics, and what not,—and Mrs. Ketchum was an affectionate, respectful daughter to both alike, anxious to consult their tastes, anticipate their wishes, and obey their very distracting and somewhat imperious commands, for their advice and counsels were apt to take the latter shape. A more complete and ideal paradise for two weary old women, who had been battling with poverty and

misfortune respectively for sixty and sixty-five years, it would be impossible to conceive; yet, such is the perversity of human nature, neither of them was satisfied, happy, or particularly grateful. One would have supposed that there was no room for the serpent to wriggle in, try as he might; yet he was there, in envy and jealousy, malice and all uncharitableness, pride and love of dominion. All Mr. Ketchum's thoughtfulness, generosity, and benefactions were poisoned to each by the thought that the other shared them. Did he bring home a box of particularly fine grapes for Mrs. Vane, that lady was certain that its counterpart was reserved for her rival. Did he surprise his mother by sending her up a handsome silk dress of the most superior quality, she knew quite well that another dress had been cut from the same piece for Mrs. Vane. And so the honest fellow got but tepid thanks, and went delicately, like King Agag, fearing to tread on one or other of the sensitive plants, whose "feelings" would hardly bear being breathed upon, though they had small care for the feelings of others; and Mabel was ever gentle and good and patient, and the two foolish old bodies squabbled over everything that came up, and made themselves very ridiculous and very miserable. The usual attitude of the belligerents was one of ill-repressed sniffs and sneers: the warfare was illogical and deathless, though rarely did it find vent in open outbreaks. These, when they came, occurred always when Mr. Ketchum's restraining influence was removed, for, with all his indulgence, he was emphatically master of his own house, and could, as he expressed it, "put his foot down," indeed, plant both feet firmly and squarely and stamp on other feet that got in his way. Once at table, when Mrs. Ketchum Senior had openly taunted Mrs. Vane with being a dependant on her son's bounty, and Mrs. Vane had taken the ground that the third-cousin of an English earl conferred an honor in accepting anything at the hands of social inferiors who were only too glad to purchase good blood at any price,

Mr. Ketchum had got into one of his rare rages, and had frightened them so thoroughly and rebuked them so sternly that for a month afterward all was as beautifully calm and bright as moonlight in the tropics.

As a rule, he would good-naturedly laugh and joke away the little clouds that arose on the domestic horizon, or whisper to his wife, "The ladies! God bless 'em!" and she would say, "Dear mamma is really most trying at times." Husband and wife were in perfect accord and sympathy, and quite resolved to do their duty, no matter how disagreeable.

But, as if this situation were not enough to try the temper and exercise the tact and forbearance of any couple, a third element of discord had been added some time before the period of which this treats. It happened in this way. Mr. and Mrs. Ketchum had spent the previous summer in England, and while there the latter was much shocked to receive one day a letter from a former governess, written actually from the union, into which the worthy woman had drifted, owing to a complication of misfortunes,—the failure of a bank containing her little savings, ill health, and old age. She begged to see her "*theure allerliebste Schülerin*," and of course Mabel went to her at once, and had her gentle heart much touched by the friendless and forlorn state in which she found her old friend. And what should Job do but go and see the poor creature himself, carrying more life and sunshine into a dingy institution and a despairing soul than either had ever known before!

Fräulein Faustina Schmidt was certainly not the loveliest of her sex at her best, much less in the faded print bed-gown that served her for every-day wear and the black hood that framed her broad, roughly-hewn German face (restless Mr. Ketchum had insisted on seeing her at once, and would hardly have waited had it been the queen instead, desirous of appearing before him in her coronation-robcs); but had she been young and lovely, and an heiress besides,

she could not have met with more kind and considerate treatment from our American.

How she ever gathered the gist of her visitor's eccentrically-worded conversation and quavered out her assent, surprise, and gratitude, no one knows, but in a very brief time the royal-hearted fellow had settled all her future, hired a nurse for her, ordered her clothes packed on the morrow, and herself to be transported bodily to Brighton to convalesce. After this he went all over the establishment, made various shrewd and searching comments on what he saw, resisted several direct and indirect attempts to lighten him of a shilling, and finally left behind him enough money to give the inmates what he called "a good, square meal, reckoning eight to a turkey and trimmings," and to provide enough tobacco for the luckless old men and tea for the peevish old women to last three full months.

As he was about to drive off, a fancy struck him, and he hailed the functionary with whom he had just parted.

"What would it cost to stuff 'em with oysters?" he said.

"Beg pardon, sir?"

"The turkeys, I'm talking about. I'd like those poor old dead-beats to know an oyster when they meet it in the next world."

The official stared, confounded by the proposition and the terms in which it was made.

"For us, sir, you mean, I suppose. Thank you, sir. It would be a matter of—"

"I mean for the whole lay-out."

"For them *paupers*, sir? You never can be meanin' to do such a wicked thing, beggin' pardon for makin' so bold."

"Oh, that's your opinion, is it? Well, it ain't mine. I guess I'll be forgiven for it. They don't have such a lively time, that you should grudge 'em this little blow-out. Poor things! it would be money in their pockets if they never had been born. Well, speak up: what's the damage?"

Thus rebuked and solicited, the

official named twice the sum necessary for the purpose, and was told that oysters must be considerably dearer in the country than in London, and got something more than half; and away rattled Mr. Ketchum, having first announced that he was "coming down to see the thing out." This he actually did, ten days later, and a chapter might be written about his visit and his interviews with the clergyman of the parish, the doctor, and various local magnates.

He gave his wife a lively enough account of the affair afterward: "They were all out in all their war-paint and feathers,—regular paper-mill display; had been getting ready, evidently, for a week," he said. "Poor things! I took down a lot of gooseberry champagne, and when the corks began to pop every eye was glued to the nearest bottle and glittered like the Ancient Mariner's. Nobody said a word. When it was poured out, some gulped down the glassful and seemed to have a palate a mile long, and others seemed to dole it out almost a drop at a time. You could see it was kingdom-come to 'em. I haven't had as much fun for a coon's age. And you ought to have seen them when the first oyster struck 'em full and fair all round and went straight to the spot! I would have given anything for their photographs taken in the act. Mean, coppery little things I thought 'em, no more like our Blue Points than chalk's like cheese; but they didn't know the difference. We drank the queen's health, and the President's, and the army, and the navy, and the church, if you please, and they tried to get in a lot of the 'generous benefactor' business, but I put a stop to that mighty quick. There was one old champion gormandizer, about ten thousand years old, that ought to be dead to-day if he isn't. And—Lord, Lord!—the songs! It was worth every cent of the money, and more too." Then, after a long pause, "There is nothing for the old lady but blood-letting, and we—that is, the United States—have got to hold the basin, Daisy," he concluded.

Mrs. Ketchum had not bargained for

such complete success as resulted from her attempt to awaken her husband's interest in her ex-governess, and, when he announced that he meant to take Fraülein Schmidt home with them, she could not believe her ears. A small—a very small—pension was as much as she had dreamed of, and to her mind would have been a munificent return for such services.

"To live with us! You surely can't mean it, love? What an extraordinary idea!" she said, in quite a loud voice for her. "What put it into your head?"

"Why, you see, she hasn't got a friend on the face of the green earth except us," he replied simply, as if that covered the whole ground. He turned a frank, pleasant face toward his wife for a moment as he said this, quite unshadowed by doubts or misgivings, and then went on brushing the short-cut, bristling hairs on his head, as if his object was to brush them off, for this conversation took place early in the morning, when Mr. Ketchum was effecting a toilet by means of his usual energetic methods.

"But to live with us?" murmured his wife.

"Yes. Why not? All she wants is a seat in a chimney-corner for a few years with kind people. She has taught school for fifty years, and has got nothing but rheumatism to show for it and death to look forward to. I guess, now, we can take her in out of the cold, can't we, Daisy?"

Mrs. Ketchum had all the acquiescent meekness of the English wife, and would have submissively consented to almost any proposition of her husband's, but she had something more, and it was this quality that led to a rather unusual and impulsive demonstration on her part. She ran swiftly across the room, put both arms gently around her husband's neck (it was impossible for her to be other than gentle), gave him several kisses, and then stood off and admired him unaffectedly.

"Why, hello, Daisy! What's up? Want fifty pounds?" said he.

"No. It's only that you are such a

dear!" she explained, in her ordinary tranquil tones. "There never was any one like you, my dear husband, and I do love you for it." Woman-like, she did not state what "it" was, but she did better,—she understood and sympathized with it.

"But what will the mothers say?" she presently asked. "They will never submit to it, not even for a twelve-month,—never! I really think they would leave the house first."

"Oh, no, they wouldn't," said Mr. Ketchum coolly. "They are a great deal too sharp for that. They are not going to saw themselves off a limb for a bird's nest."

The astute Mr. Ketchum was not mistaken, and Fraülein Schmidt was soon successfully grafted on the family tree, rested thankfully in its wide-spreading shade, and ate gratefully of its generous fruit without frightening away other birds of gayer plumage with a better claim to lodge in its branches. Mr. Ketchum, to be sure, displayed some tact and generalship in the affair. That is, he gave the enemy no notice of the intended movement beforehand, offered no apology at any time, and left his wife to make all the explanations. In his jolly, off-hand manner there was a tinge of authority that the mothers correctly interpreted, as he introduced Fraülein Schmidt to them and then installed her himself in a comfortable room and told her that she was "just to make herself at home."

"If you don't see what you want, ask for it, as the stores say. I guess you'll do now, won't you?" he said to his *protégée*, who shed copious tears, called upon "loved heaven" and "the dear God" a dozen times in a vain attempt to express her gratitude, and could scarcely believe her good fortune, which seemed made of the stuff that dreams are, until she had spent a week in unpacking a certain hair-trunk (blistered and labelled and brass-nailed to a wonderful extent) and had arranged and rearranged its contents in the wardrobe-bureau, closet, and chest of drawers with which she was lavishly supplied.

The rival mothers were completely taken aback. They thought it best to temporize for a day or two, and then open fire. Mrs. Ketchum Senior accordingly came into the room where her son was on the third morning after his arrival, prepared for conflict. She was a delicate, refined-looking woman, with very large, light-blue eyes, emphasized by arched brows, which she sent up in an aggrieved way almost to the roots of her white hair as she took a rocking-chair, apparently that she might make a virtue of sitting bolt upright in it, and demanded imperiously an answer to certain questions. "Is it possible, Job, that you mean that horrid German creature, that eats with her knife and is perfectly odious in every way, to stay here permanently?" she said, after some talk between them.

"That's it, ma'am. You've hit the nail *right on the head*. She'll stay here until the undertaker asks to see her on a little matter of business; and I shall expect everybody in this house to treat her with politeness and respect," he replied.

"I'll have nothing to do with her,—nothing whatever," she snapped. "How many more foreigners are you going to take upon yourself to support, pray?"

"I can't say, really. I ain't an emigration-agent, exactly,—no fellow can be who wouldn't rather tell a lie on credit than the truth for cash,—but I rather like founding a house for indignant females as far as I've got. It keeps things moving along lively. Look here, mother: don't let's have any more of this. You've got all you want, haven't you? If you haven't, you know very well you can have it quick enough. What do you want to go pounding the saw-dust out of that old Dutch doll for? Live and let live."

"You mean that you are going to keep her?"

"Yes. She is here, and here she is going to stay. And, mind, she's got to be treated right; and that's all about it."

"Well, my son, far be it from *me* to dictate, or even *advise*, any course of conduct to any one in this house. Only,

I'll not stay here any longer. I'll go to my brother John's, where, if I am to be overrun at all, it will not be by foreigners and paupers. And mark my words: you'll fail in business yet, fooling your money away as you do, and buying—"

"You mean my uncle John's?"

"Yes, of course."

"Well, I didn't know. You seemed to lay so much stress on his being your brother, I thought perhaps there was some mistake. Now, here is the way that is: You know I am more than glad to have you stay with me as long as you find it agreeable, mother; but if you would rather be with your brother John of course I won't interfere. My object is to make you as happy and as comfortable as I can. When would you like to go?"

Here was a dilemma out of which there was but one way, and that a way Mrs. Ketchum was not disposed to take just then; so she said, "To-morrow," very haughtily and huffily, and left the room. Whereupon her son wore his shrewdest smile, being privately convinced that she would either not go at all, or, going, would remain a very short time indeed.

At the same time, in another part of the house, Mrs. Vane was taking her daughter very roundly to task about the same thing. She was a large, florid woman, who, in order to give effect to the position she took up as martyr, on such occasions was wont to put on her dressing-gown, tie a handkerchief around her forehead, and, vinaigrette in hand, approach the grievance of the moment, whatever it might be, warding off every return-blow in the discussion by pathetic allusions to her "poor head" (which never ached so badly as to prevent the fullest expression of her own views and sentiments), and retiring when utterly worsted behind a huge miniature-brooch of her husband, than which no warrior ever had a more effective shield.

"What is this most extraordinary news," she began, "that I hear from the servants—the servants, mark you—about that foolish, half-witted old body, Frawlein Schmidt?"

"What do you mean, mamma?"

"That she is regularly unpacked, and calls this her 'so beautiful home.' Weak as you are, you never can have asked her to stay here for any length of time. And what duplicity to keep from me the fact that she was coming!"

Mrs. Ketchum explained her husband's wishes and views, and Mrs. Vane burst out afresh:

"I never heard such a mad idea in my life! You should really see a doctor about your husband without his knowledge. Keep her for life! A creature that has no more claim upon him than any other beggar in the street! And do you mean to say that you have given in to the arrangement?"

"Would you have me oppose my husband, mamma, and anger him without just cause?"

"You have cause enough, I should think. The maddest idea! Pray, are there no hospitals or asylums in America, that gentlemen's houses are to be turned into such? Assert yourself, Mabel,—assert yourself, and send the woman away this very day when Mr. Ketchum is gone to his shop, or office, or whatever he calls it."

"I cannot, mamma; and I would not do anything so wrong, if I could. How can you wish me to displease or deceive my husband?"

"No gentleman would ask such a thing of his wife."

"Mamma! How dare you! I will not allow—will not tolerate—"

"Mabel! This to your widowed mother! What would your dear papa say if he could hear you?" (pointing impressively to her brooch.)

"I beg your pardon, mamma. I did not mean to speak rudely or forget the respect due you; but you must not, you must not, mamma, say such cruel things of my dear husband. He is the best of men, the kindest, the most indulgent, the most delicate in all his dealings with me, and—forgive me for saying so—with you, and with everybody. I brought husband nothing, as you know, mamma. I have no right to object to his asking anybody that he sees fit to this house

for as long a time as he deems best. Everything here is his, to do as he pleases with. Not that he would have Fräulein here if I objected. But I don't object. I wish whatever he wishes. I am quite willing to be guided by him in everything. And it certainly is not a proper thing for *you* to object,—you, to whom he has been more generous and considerate than any English son we have ever known, you, whose every wish has been consulted, for whom every luxury has been provided, whose allowance is larger than that of any duke's daughter at home, and who owe everything to the man who you say is not a gentleman. Not a gentleman, indeed! Oh, oh, oh, oh, mamma! oh, oh!"

Mrs. Job Ketchum had probably never spoken with anything like the same energy and boldness in her whole life; but the fire of indignant eloquence was soon quenched in tears.

"My poor head!" murmured Mrs. Vane, and applied her vinaigrette first to one nostril and then to the other; but her daughter was wounded to the heart and was wholly unmoved by her terrific sufferings. Indeed, she sobbed so violently as quite to alarm the mother, who had always seen her quiet and self-controlled. "My dearest child! My own love! You must not excite yourself so about nothing. You must really be calm," she said. "I have said nothing to put you about so. I don't deny that Mr. Ketchum is a most worthy man, an excellent man—"

"Go away, mamma, I beg, and leave me to myself."

"That's right, love; lie down for a while until you are more composed. You are getting as nervous as the American women, really. Dawkins shall bring you a cup of tea."

"I wish nothing, except to be left alone," Mrs. Ketchum maintained, in a choked voice.

"What! Am I to consider myself ordered from the room?" called out Mrs. Vane tragically. "Very well. So be it. I leave not only this room, but this house. I am going home. But

remember, ungrateful, wicked daughter that you are, *you have a child!*"

With these mysterious and threatening words Mrs. Vane stalked out of the room, all offended majesty, unopposed and unrecalled.

Is it necessary to say that, in spite of these stormy passages between certain members of the Ketchum household and the distinct declaration of war and choice of exile made by both mothers, Mrs. Ketchum Senior's "brother John" had no demand made upon him for hospitality or protection, and Mrs. Vane's passage to England was not secured in any steamer whatever?

That very night Mabel found a deeply-affectionate, remonstrant, apologetic note from her mother pinned to her dressing-table. It was a fad of that lady's to address numbers of such to her about anything and everything, although they were under the same roof, and she was doubtless glad to have such a topic to discuss at length with the fatal fluency, the profusion of adjectives, the scarcity of ideas, and the utter absence of punctuation that characterized her style. Mabel read the production with a serious face, as of one performing a disagreeable duty, and it took so long that her husband asked who her correspondent was.

On being told, he laughed gleefully, and, as he kicked off a boot, said, "What the mischief is she always writing to you for, when she sees you all day long and can say anything she wants to? Lord, how she must love it! It's my belief that she makes pot-hooks and hangers on the slate, now, and sends them to the young one in his cradle; and how she is ever going to reconcile her mind to dying and going out of this world, knowing that she can't write back and tell all her relations and friends and acquaintances what it's like in the other one, I can't imagine. I hope it won't rile you for me to say so, but your mother's letters always remind me of old Peck's sermons, Daisy. I took you to hear him once, in Tecumseh, you remember. You never know where you are, and there is no stop in 'em. It's

'firstly,' and 'secondly,' and 'thirdly, my brethren,' and 'whereas,' and 'moreover,' and 'in this connection,' and 'again,' and 'nevertheless,' and 'now,' and 'lastly,' and 'again,' and 'to sum up,' and 'again,' and 'in conclusion,' and you ain't done then for twenty minutes or so until you hear the Doxology. What's all that about, anyway?"

Mabel gave him a moderate and medicated account of the interview she had had with her mother, and he listened with much interest.

"Why, *my* mother took off her collar and let herself loose to-day on the same subject," he said; "but she saw it was no use, and knocked under this afternoon, finding that I was bent and determined on having Frawlein's plank in the platform, no matter who bolted. Women are mortal queer, savin' your ladyship's presence, anyway. When I was sowing enough wild oats for ten, ma was as good and kind to me as if I had been all the twelve apostles instead of only one, and that the wrong one. She never blamed me nor reproached me; she didn't even sit up for me and weep over me, but just loved me right along through the whole thing and waited for me to come to my senses. But now that I am a good little boy, comparatively, with a pocket full of Sunday-school tickets from my teacher, she finds fault with pretty nearly everything I do, it seems to me. Well, now that the fire is out and the engines have gone home, I hope we'll have peace; but it isn't going to be peace on any terms, I can tell you."

When Mabel awoke next morning she detected Dawkins, her mother's maid, in the very act of fastening another note to her pin-cushion,—an unconditional surrender this time.

But all the same Mr. Ketchum had only won one of the victories which are worse than a defeat. The character alone of the warfare was changed, and from having been deadly enemies the mothers became allies welded together by a common prejudice, intent upon defeating a common enemy. The new system was so subtle, so ingenious, and,

above all, so thoroughly feminine that it worked to a charm for some time, under Mr. Ketchum's very eye and superintendence, as it were. Poor old Schmidt was sent to Coventry, was snubbed, was beaten with many rods, all small ones, was cuffed and collared morally twenty times a day, if such violent terms can apply to buffetings and assaults to which she offered no more resistance than if she had been the softest of feather pillows. She dearly loved to go to her room and read her Jean Paul or Klopstock or Goethe until some time after midnight, but, being forbidden to do so, meekly extinguished the gas in her room at nine o'clock and made no complaint. She tried to train some ivy that she had brought with her inside the sill of her window, near which she was wont to sit with her sewing; but when the allies declared that it would inevitably attract spiders and earwigs, and swept it all away, she submitted without a word. At table the allies never offered her anything, took her seat whenever it suited their convenience, without apology, and took great pains to show her that they considered her conversationally a non-combatant and socially an inferior. Of some of these petty persecutions Mabel was ignorant; to others she closed her eyes as the least of two evils. At last, one day, Mrs. Vane, emboldened by what she thought her son-in-law's obtuseness, pushed rudely past poor Fräulein as they entered the dining-room and seated herself in that lady's chair at the breakfast-table, waving her hand to Fräulein, and saying, "You can go down there somewhere—anywhere."

Fräulein obeyed: she would have sat under the table, had she been ordered to do so, quite without remonstrance.

Mr. Ketchum's eye followed her. "Isn't that Frawlein's seat that you have taken by mistake?" he asked of Mrs. Vane.

"Yes; but that don't matter," she replied. "She'll do where she is."

"I disagree with you. I must ask you to take your own, and to keep it in future," he said, with more dignity than she had ever seen in him.

"Don' move, I beg, I bray," pleaded Fräulein, much alarmed by the domestic situation.

"Do you mean to say that you give a *governess* precedence over *me*?" Mrs. Vane indignantly demanded of her son-in-law.

"Who's talking of precedence, madam? I mean you to be polite in my house to my guests. That's what I mean," said Mr. Ketchum, in a low, distinct voice, and said no more.

Mrs. Vane did not rage, did not weep, did not quit the table. She, to the amazement of her ally, the consternation of Fräulein Schmidt, and the surprise of her own daughter, said, "I beg your pardon. I have been rude. I am in the wrong," and went to her own place, a conquered woman.

"Precedence, indeed! I'll see whether Frawlein Schmidt is ever again insulted in my house, as I know she has been in more ways than one," said Mr. Ketchum to his wife.

Next day, when the dinner-bell rang, what should he do but march up to poor old Schmidt, offer her his arm, take her in to dinner, put her on his right hand, and help her first to all that was furnished forth on his mahogany! Nor was this a mere caprice. He made it an invariable rule henceforth, no matter who came to the house, and was neither to be reasoned, coaxed, nor ridiculed out of it, to the end of the chapter. It was his idea of precedence; and, although it was not that of Debrett or the "*Almanach de Gotha*," we get more than a hint of it in a much older work,—the *Book of Books*.

Fräulein Schmidt after this enjoyed all her privileges, rights, and immunities. She had a student-lamp, for one thing, and flowers in all her windows, and a cat, and a canary, and the pleasure of darning and mending her benefactor's clothes,—the last being a luxury that she insisted on. Terrified at first to find herself so conspicuously distinguished by Mr. Ketchum, she soon grew accustomed to it, and dwelt securely and happily in that best of all asylums, a good man's home. As for

the mothers, if they were away when this story opened it was entirely due to their wish to see Niagara,—a satisfaction that Mr. Ketchum was willing to give them, if only to mark his approbation of

the angelic behavior that followed and flowed from the stand he had taken about a certain guest.

F. C. BAYLOR.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE FINE ART OF "PICKING UP."

I REMEMBER when I was a very little child visiting a country-house full of articles which I was told the owner had "picked up." The phrase seemed to accommodate itself very nicely to the imaginations of the grown people of the household, but it used to seem to me as though Mr. — might have spent years in carefully selecting and purchasing his possessions. There was a long, somewhat dim hall in the house, full of Eastern curiosities, two mummies in glass cases, and some heavy fragments of antique sculpture; the drawing-room was like a museum, with ponderous cabinets, early Florentine and Spanish hangings, and the daintiest specimens of bric-à-brac. Mr. — had evidently "picked up" everything possible in his foreign wanderings, yet even to my childish mind the process had been careful and guarded.

One night I remember some one in the company remarking that he must know better than most people just where to find things.

"Oh," he answered, "after you get some experience, picking up things abroad becomes a genuine fine art."

Now, between the chance investment in interesting objects which I suppose "picking up" in its widest sense to mean and a deliberate search after curios there is just enough of difference to give the former occupation a tinge of perpetual novelty and discovery. You go into a town where bric-à-brac shops may be, and you find yourself drawn into one old street after another, lured

on by that instinctive feeling which to the initiated is like another sense that there are objects waiting for you, and buoyed up by a feeling that you do not really need to buy, but only to look; and each experience accumulated becomes a new pleasure; each time you detect the false and proclaim the true you have the exhilaration of a growing connoisseurship than which nothing is more pleasing to the lover of articles of the past. When Mrs. — says, "I mean to do my library up entirely in old things," one shivers to think of the prosaic premeditated journey into the region of antiques she is about to make; but who but one who has known what it suggests can really appreciate the smile and air with which a friend shows you a tiny little dish or a bit of beloved color which he says he "came upon" one day somewhere in some obscure place?

There used to be a general idea that all antiques in furniture, hangings, or china must when brought to America come from either Germany or Italy or the East,—bric-à-brac shops seeming only to thrive in Continental countries or the Orient; but the ceramic mania brought England into prominence, and in the search after china fine resources in oak and hangings came to light. Still, for some time Wardour Street in London remained the Mecca of many American seekers after the antique. Well do I remember a journey thither on behalf of a friend one yellow November morning, when the sun might have been an

unprincipled kerosene lamp for all the quality of its illumination, but the unpleasant or fitful light tinged Wardour Street with something appropriate to the generality of its wares: the few really good articles pushed into prominence had their defects softened thereby, while the crowd of manufactured specimens took shelter beneath that friendly veil of fog. There was one large repository of carefully powder-stricken, bullet-worn old articles into which we were invited by a dealer whose manner and smile were enough to induce a visit even should his wares prove unsatisfactory. He begged us at once to believe that everything in his possession was of the very best. "Genuine article, ma'am," he would say, thumping a finely worn-out cabinet or chest or table. "No one can beat me in *these*." And indeed I do not think that many could, since he employed fifty workmen in the upper rooms of his big warehouse and kept two people constantly employed in creating worn-out-looking canvases of the period of Sir Peter Lely. This dealer was gifted with a fluency of speech which almost drew your money into his hands. He was certainly the most dramatic salesman I have ever seen: as he discoursed on the merits of his wares he had an apparently unconscious air of moving backwards among the various articles about him, lightly poisoning an elbow or a forefinger on the particular object specified, leaving you only an instant to glance at it while his speech flowed on to other points, producing a delightfully bewildering effect on the imagination in regard to both his knowledge and his material possessions. Indeed, I have often wondered how we escaped that morning with no more ruinous investment than that of a fire-screen, which, having been made for one particular fireplace, was of course entirely useless when set before any other.

Of course there are many excellent bric-à-brac shops in London, but these thrive, I believe, through the interest of special customers; many of them are but little known to the generality of people seeking for fine specimens of the an-

tique, for really good articles find so ready a sale that the merchant who has once established his reputation needs neither advertisement nor ostentatious sign. One of the most interesting places of the kind belongs to a well-known costumer, a Frenchman, himself an artist, whose absolute taste as well as entire knowledge of everything connected with his trade makes him the oracle of his class. Many a winter day have we escaped from the dreariness of London weather to be cheered by an inspection of B——'s latest purchases, which he would bring out with a loving air into his fascinating parlor, spreading them forth artistically, the genuine costumes filling the room with suggestions of their own time, brocades, satinets, and soft woollen stuffs, rich or delicate in color, their very shabbiness full of significance, their cut and finish distractingly fine. For some of these, and to meet the demands of various artists noted for their particularity in detail, B—— had taken many a journey, but always prosperously so far as his discoveries went, and while engaged in a search for something special he was sure to pick up various articles which his patrons at home hailed with delight. I remember after one of his journeys of the kind a characteristic note of invitation from him, written on paper worthy of the writer and containing a promise that we should be "overjoyed" with what we saw if we came down to his house on a certain morning. Did we need a second bidding? It was one of many little expeditions of the kind which seem so permanently fixed in our minds as English in character and association that no wonder we connect almost all bric-à-brac experiences with that country and with its people by birth or adoption. Even B——'s nationality seemed to be in keeping with his house, his surroundings, his occupations: his flittings across the Channel were so purely professional that they never influenced our idea of him as one of our English figures. The April morning of which I speak was breaking up with little mists and fitful rays of sunshine as we crossed Kensington Gardens and

made our way through the labyrinth of streets which one of our party considered a short cut to B——'s house; flower-venders were beginning to fill the air with their cries of spring blossoms and make patches of warm color here and there in the still vaporous atmosphere. But the day was not a bright one. The spring was late, and so the prospect of B——'s rooms was the more alluring. His house bore no outward evidence of his trade, beyond his name on a brass plate with one or two significant words beneath, and you entered to find only what seemed to be an artistically-arranged private dwelling. To the right a small drawing-room furnished in exquisite taste offered constant surprises, since there did the knowing and finely-organized B—— place his latest investments to their best advantage. There you saw precisely how well a ladder-legged table, a tapestry chair, or even a fragment of carved oak might look,—the cunning hand of their owner understanding just how his possessions could be arranged so as to show them off to advantage. But, best of all, by no chance were you ever deceived in the quality of the goods purchased at his fascinating rooms: whether it were an inlaid cabinet or a yard of lace, his word could be taken as guarantee for its value or antiquity.

Across the hall a second room, to which a fine fireplace and oaken press gave character, had somewhat more the air of a workshop: there we surmised from little hints that cutting and fitting, cleansing or dyeing, might sometimes take place; there, at all events, B—— produced his treasures in the way of costume, and on the special occasion to which I refer we were certainly as overjoyed as he had promised we should be, for he had brought back from Spain some of the quaintest specimens of seventeenth-century garments, nearly all of which were made of satins exquisitely fine and soft in texture, as Spanish fabrics are apt to be, and flowered over with pale threads of gold and silver, here and there the color of some silk broiery mingling with the shining bullion, the whole effect being more suggestive of

their original splendor than heavier and more perfectly preserved fabrics could be. There was one child's dress, very tiny, very quaint, and very splendid, the magnificence of which had something positively solemn about it, although there was something a little pathetic as well as absurd in the idea that a mere baby must have worn it. The little royalties of Vandyck's day seemed to rise before us as B—— flung upon a dark oak chair these pompous little garments, rich pinks and very faded yellows, fringed or laced with silver, and having long skirts lined with satin and cut so that they must have stood out with portentous stiffness when worn. With these were a lot of trifles,—fans and gloves, odd slippers, and even some portions of garments, which B—— treasured as affording him patterns in his own busy workshop. And there were some rare bits of china, a chair or two, and a table at which Sacharissa might have poured out wine and looked away the heart of many a cavalier. What need of sunshine or spring weather? we used to think, ungrateful that we were for the lavish joy of the English May-time, as we lingered among these treasures, conjuring up with facility so many warmly-colored pictures in which such costumes played the efficient part one can readily imagine as belonging to the most bewitching human drapery.

But it was in the heart of England, in villages little known to the general tourist, that we found our choicest treasures, the need of some articles for artistic purposes leading us for the first time into a most fascinating kind of speculation or investment, and one that involved experiences such as we could not have had under any other circumstances. It so happened that we were in a village in the southwest of England during a moorland journey,—the trip itself so vagrant in design that I believe our stopping at this place was caused by nothing of greater importance than the fact that one or two laborers whom we addressed on approaching the place wore what the artist of the party called most "valuable" smock-frocks. To this

charm was added that of the most pronounced provincial dialect. The combination, set against a background of hilly road, the gabled ends of an old inn, and a small, quaint church-yard, proved irresistible. We put up our horses, and were soon taking tea in a sitting-room of the inn, every article within which one person bravely declared he would like to buy then and there just as it stood. The room was long, and would have been very formal in tone but for three deep-seated and irregular windows, in all of which were cushions covered in faded red damask, with the most dignified little knobs at each end and a reverse side of green changeable silk. The middle window bulging out gave the room a very sociable aspect, and directly in front of it was a work-table which roused keen feelings of envy, covetousness, and the like in our minds when we found that a purchase was impossible. The round tea-table of dark old oak, the sideboard, chairs, and other articles, were one and all subjected to our inspection, but with no comforting result. A purchase was impossible; yet an idea that among cottagers in this primitive village some good things might be found revealed itself that evening. There had been all day in the mind of one of the party a craving for a dress of about the period of 1797, and when our dinner was served the round-faced Abigail who waited on us wore a curious old gown, if not quite of that distractingly varied period, at least suggestive of it so far as the side-seams and darts and certain little "perks" to the sleeve were concerned. After enduring this vision in silence for some little time, we inquired whether she had made the dress herself. With much difficulty we extracted the information that it had belonged to her grandmother. Early the next morning we set out, following the maid's direction, to a cottage half a mile from the inn, where her aunts lived, who she said were still, she believed, in possession of various garments belonging to a dead-and-gone ancestress.

In that little town there was a long, hilly street, with houses and shops ir-

regularly on either side, nearly all of the poorer or plainer sort, for it was a village which had almost no local attractions, and which was known to the generality of people only as a resting-place between two long journeys. To us, as I suppose would have been the case with any Americans who enjoy such things, there was an exhilaration in being among people so absolutely primitive, so typical of their class and part of the country: they seemed to be shut in by that unvarying routine of life which makes nothing of months and years. As we sauntered up the hilly street, glancing from right to left in the various open door-ways, we judged it was precisely the sort of a community in which chests of old clothes would lie undisturbed for years,—not hoarded as souvenirs, but preserved from force of habit or because no occasion offered for disturbing them.

English cottagers are always hospitable, and on entering the tidy stone-flagged kitchen of a little house with a peaked roof and lattice-worked panes of glass we were well received even before our errand was mentioned. The elder members of the family were absent in the neighborhood, but there was a fine-looking young woman and her husband (he followed his trade of cobbler in a retired, snug-looking part of the kitchen), and on our explaining the motive of our visit they both listened with the air of people who felt it necessary to concentrate all their faculties on an entirely novel idea. Indeed, in this as in similar experiences it was as well that one among the party was possessed of a spirit of unremitting zeal which was always patient, allowing the person who owned the desired articles to be as discursive as she or he wished, bringing such a one up now and then to the question in hand, taking care, however, never to produce the kind of frigid dignity which makes the sale of an old garment impossible. The young people were finally made to understand just what we wanted, although it was hard to impress upon them that we did not care for "fine" things, the next point to be forcibly impressed upon their minds

that the age and condition of the garment were of less consequence than the cut and fashion, finally that we were *not* second-hand dealers. When I had at last made clear to the young woman's mind precisely what we wanted, she grew quite animated over the idea, and, going up-stairs,—it was such a pretty little shallow staircase,—called out to some one above to come down at once, explaining to me that her mother had come home.

A tidy old woman descended, and peered at me very curiously while her daughter explained my desire for what she called "annient" things. "Where's old Aunt Sarah's gown, mother?" she said eagerly, and in a few moments the dress was before us. It was very quaint and pretty,—one of the genuine old linens of our great-grandmothers' day,—a white ground daintily sprigged with purple, and the fashion something like that of the gowns the Vicar of Wakefield's daughters might have worn at home,—a prim bodice, sleeves short to the elbow, and a little "top" skirt open in front and with places to tuck up the corners in.

"It's not much of a gown, you see, ma'am," the old woman said, regarding it with dubious turns of her head. "We've kept it for my mother's sake: it were her elder sister Sarah's."

They were ready enough to sell it for a moderate sum, evidently regarding me with much surprise when I expressed my great satisfaction in the purchase. I think it was in that cottage also that we became the possessors of a funny little bed-gown of the same period. It had huge flowers over it, and a deep yoke into which the body was set with many gaugings. Sometimes we found people who had wonderfully good old things which, however, they steadily refused to sell; but they were usually willing to lend them long enough to be copied, and a little dress-maker in one village worked for us with much zeal, reproducing one of the quaintest gowns I have ever seen. It belonged to a woman whose open doorway I had often passed before I made

her acquaintance. The village was a desolate one on the moors, to which we had gone for a week's sketching and loitering *en route* to a more characteristic spot. Fronting our windows was a little street that suddenly took a breezy turn upward, and at that point stood a small three-roomed cottage, with a bit of green to the right of it, but no garden or green-yard. The door-way opened directly upon the roadside, and beyond you could see the purple moorland, with a long road winding away across the downs. Every time we passed this little cottage of an afternoon, I used to see the figure of an elderly woman seated just within the door-way, her gaze—a very patient one—turned upon the quiet, melancholy country. Something about her interested me strongly: there was in her face the dignity of some sorrow long and patiently borne. Her type was the usual one among her class in South Devon,—strong and rather dark, the bloom of girlhood having grown to something like a pallid brownness, the eyes deep-set and weary, the mouth and chin full of strength, tinged by a sad sort of reserve. One afternoon I stopped and spoke to her. She kindly asked me to come in. I noticed a beautiful old oak chair in her kitchen, and she said that she prized it beyond everything, it being "grandfather's last." She said she had heard we were looking for old costumes and "worn rubbishing sort of things." She wondered if she had not something we would like. I was only too delighted to pursue the subject with her, and it resulted in her bringing out various quaint possessions, two or three of which she willingly sold me. There were some other things, she said, in an odd, constrained sort of voice, and evidently pondering in her mind whether she could bring herself to parting with them; but she did not offer to show them to me, either then or after I had visited her two or three times and she had told me all the events in her history. She was poor, very poor, with that hopeless sort of poverty one sees in England,—poverty that never can be anything better or braver. She had come origi-

nally from Lancashire, because her "man" had a better chance down here in Devon. They had five children, and the struggle for years had been terrible; then her man died, and she, the widow, turned with all her life and soul to the children.

"Not one but said they were the cleanest and brightest round about, ma'am; and Jenny, my youngest girl, was the pride of the place. Her were as beautiful as a young princess, ma'am, and I used to fear me it 'ud turn her head. Mary was browner and a poorer-looking lass, but as steady as the sun, and her thought the world ought to belong to Jenny. Nothing could 'a' been sweeter than Jenny was, though,—never out of sorts or quarrelsome. Ah! I can see her now, ma'am, coming down that road with her little gay ways. I wonder how it can be twenty years ago! Well, there were a most respectable carpenter here,—the nicest young man in the place, with a home of his own, a tidy bit of a home, and a shop,—and he and my Jenny were sweethearts; and I used to lie down in my bed at night thankful to the good Lord for giving my lass such a man to care for her. There came here from North Devon a party of sailors one summer-time,—I never, none of us never got the rights of why they came, but they set the young people about quite foolish, and my Jack—my first boy—came in one wet night and says he, 'Mother, what ever do you think? what do you think?' 'I don't know, lad,' I answers. There he were, standing over by the fire: his eyes were dancing. Jenny she was sewing by the table, and I can see her look up now. 'Well,' says Jack, 'I'm going for to be a sailor, mother,' says he, 'and I'll bring you home everything.' We tried to laugh, but we knew it was no use, and Jenny says, 'Jack, is it that Ruthers has made you think o' this?' And, though I thought I knew everything my lass had done or seen or heard, this were the first time I'd ever heard of that man's name. When I spoke and asked her, her face flushed, and she said he was one of the sailors

she'd met up at the Malsters' one night there had been a little dance; and that very night he walked into our kitchen to see Jack. Well, he was handsome, ma'am, I know,—even my little Mary could 'a' seen that,—a bold, bad-looking, handsome man. Jack went off, as he said he would, but that man Ruthers came back, and Jenny fell low in her spirits, and her sweetheart Philip used to come and try to cheer her up. 'Jenny,' he says to her once, 'we'd better not bide any longer, lass: let's have the banns read at once.' But Jenny would only turn her head away and cry; and one morning when Mary went to wake her up, she was gone. We just got a word from her at Portsmouth, begging us to forgive her and to tell Philip as she was a cruel, worthless girl, but she was that man Ruthers's lawful wife. It was a terrible winter after that: my second boy died, and there was a sort of famine in this part; one thing after another had failed. Philip Rogers would come over to us and sit of an evening and try and cheer us up. We never spoke of my poor lass; we never heard of her nor of Jack; we didn't know where they were; and I think it was that time fourteen months that one day there came here a peddler-woman, and says she, 'I've a letter for you, ma'am, if your name be Ross.' And I took it, and thought to die when I saw the lines. It was from our little Jenny, and she prayed for Mary or me to come to her at B——, fifty miles away, where she lay sick and suffering. We sat together that night and thought how it could be done, and I thought my heart would get to be stone before morning, to think I hadn't money to get to my lass when I'd heard where she was. So at last Mary said she'd take fifteen shillings and go it on foot. And early in the day she started. She was such a brave one, my little Mary. Well, that was a long journey, but at last Mary got there, and went, as she used to tell me, from one mean place to a still meaner, hunting for our Jenny; and there, in a wretched garret, she found her,—alone, alone and starving

and dying. When she see Mary she just smiled and put out her two poor little hands; and Mary kissed her, and she were always sorry she said, 'Oh, Jenny, lass, what did you do it for?' for Jenny was so near her end, and she looked at her and says, 'Don't'ee be hard with me, Molly; the Lord has punished me, and I can't see you look down on me.' And Mary got her all she could, and one night her little baby came, and died before morning,—died of want, the want that had killed my Jenny. And never would the lass tell more than that he had ill-used her and then left her, and she had gone from place to place, trying to reach home, until she laid down there to die. And she died soon, ma'am. My Mary got the rector to give her a decent grave, and he helped Mary home again to tell me this story. And my Jenny never came to me again,—my little Jenny. It was a year after that we were notified of Jack's death of fever in a ship-yard. And the other boy went soon; and when times were worst here, my little Mary caught a chill. And I wonder if you notice how I keep my door open, ma'am, always open. It's because if I don't there are times when something in my heart seems to choke me. I feel I must sit and face an open door. I can't shut myself in with my sorrow; the very look of the moor is better for me. I go and open that door, and then—seems as I could breathe. But God did it all for good, I know, ma'am; but it's sometimes like a piece of lead on my heart when I think of all just being graves,—all that I ever had."

I wondered to how many lives more of actual suffering could have come; and, bare as the story was, one could fill in the outlines with their painful shadows of want and heart-sickness, of hope deferred, of all the misery of a spirit slowly breaking. I suppose the few treasures I never saw, or after that asked to see, must have been connected with little Jenny. We did not refer to them again, although I saw my old friend very often, and she seemed quite loath to have us leave. One evening she

walked with me to a friend's house, where she said she knew they had kept many "anncient" things and would be glad to sell them. It was a miserly-looking little place, clean, but rather with the air of being so to save wear and tear; and the owner of the cottage, or at all events its occupant, was a shrewd old woman, who would have figured well as the nurse in "Romeo and Juliet," so tantalizing and suspicious were her manner, her convenient deafness, and her "*law'-a-marcy*" sort of ejaculation.

She stood still in the middle of her sanded floor, one hand holding her chin, while we explained our errand, and then took some four or five minutes for completely silent consideration of the question. It was almost impossible to believe that this was her first transaction of the kind, so entirely did she enter into the spirit of the purchase, at least so far as bargaining went. She sold us a few really nice articles, and then solemnly produced a purple calico dress, made probably in 1877 or 1878, and worn and faded as such a garment might be after six months' country usage. This she averred had belonged to her great-grandmother and was over a century old. I pointed out to her gently the fact of its being made just as any purple or brown or red calico might be made at the present day, but she stoutly maintained that her great-grandmother had "a'most died in it," and it was more "*anncien*ter" than she was herself. She expressed the utmost dissatisfaction that we did not purchase this dress, and next tried to induce us to invest in her shabby old black bonnet. We left her in her cleanly dark little kitchen, an interesting figure, standing at a table in the latticed window, her head bent over the little pile of shillings and pence which she was counting, drawing her mouth tighter and tighter together, as complete a picture of feminine avarice as Hogarth could have depicted.

The search for old furniture was, I think, more entertaining, although it involved less that was personally interesting. I fear there are few spots in

England where the note of the searcher for antiquities has not been heard, but there were some villages in 1879 whose cottages had been undisturbed, and we had a most fascinating experience one autumn, for about three weeks, looking up old oak or brass or china or delftware. The place itself enclosed all the elements required for a perfect picture of the most primitive English peasant-life. It was in the southwest of Devon. We came upon it one soft, wet evening,—a little village it was, set down in the heart of the moors,—and at once an impression was conveyed to us that no idea of any force had ever originated there or ever would. It seemed to us quite a hopeful place in which to find something worth "picking up." Except in one other part of England, I never saw anything so delightfully primitive. I am nearly certain that the people had no ideas further than the most ordinary events of life demanded; and I am sure that not one of them knew more of London than that it was a large place and that the queen might sometimes be seen there. I was reminded of the delicious peasants in Mr. Hardy's novels, and in the few days we spent there I listened many a time to conversation he would have recorded verbatim. A nineteenth-century searcher for bric-à-brac was really a ludicrous figure, opposed to these plodding, contented, unimaginative souls, and, looking back, I do not wonder that we were suspected of being various eccentric characters.

We went up the principal street early in the morning, and were speedily attracted by a long, rambling building of whitewashed stone standing against a hilly stretch of country dotted irregularly with furze and low bushes, between which were wandering cart-tracks, evidently made by the covered wagon of a furze-cutter which we saw in the distance. The house defined itself slowly as we mounted the slope on which it stood, presenting its various characteristics one after another, and it took us some time to discover that, originally a monastic building, it was now divided

into various tenements, a struggling garden in the rear showing remnants of what might once have been a tranquil and secluded cloister. A seventeenth-century date, with a motto in moss-grown fragments, was cut into the principal part of the porch, on each side of which were doors leading into the more permanent abodes. The occupants seemed all "lone" women, with one exception: this was a widow who had a tribe of rosy children. Their little legs dangled from the low sloping roof of her dwelling when we came in view of it; but our attention was first attracted to the rooms at the lower end of the building. In the door-way a stout, elderly woman sat knitting in a chair at sight of which my heart was thrilled, for it was evidently a genuine seventeenth-century piece of oak, comfortable and firm, and of a shape that made one long to sketch it then and there.

Other objects in the room showed themselves with fascinating suggestions of oak and brass, and we made friends at once with the woman, who stopped her knitting and gave us a cordial invitation to enter. In answer to our inquiries as to whether she had any piece of furniture she would like to sell, she looked very thoughtful and said she would think it over. The chair coming under discussion, she bargained carefully for it, finally disposing of it to us after giving its history so far as she knew it. An old man had died in the next dwelling two or three months previously, as we learned from others as well as herself. He was one hundred years old, and his furniture was all inherited from his grandfather, so that the record of the oak chair was very clear, for it had been purchased by its present owner at a sale of his things.

In a few moments she rolled up her knitting, put it into a bag hanging upon a spinning-wheel, and excused herself to go next door for her sister. A depressed-looking, thin old woman, in a clean cap and apron and with sleeves rolled up over very skinny arms, now made her appearance, but I believe she

was brought in only as a sort of moral support, since her mental powers were but slightly taxed, no special demand being made upon them beyond such remarks as, "Sarah Turner, you know that to be a fact as well as I do," or, "Sarah Turner, you could not go against me when I say that," to which Sarah Turner, sitting on the end of the spinning-wheel, would respond by a portentous movement of her head from side to side and a few audible ejaculations.

The topic was chiefly as to what old furniture there might or might not be in the little village, our hostess declaring that it was to be had, she felt sure, if those that had it would consent to open their doors; but she by many labored sentences and Sarah Turner by Lord-Burleigh gestures intimated that this would be a very difficult undertaking. However, I will say here that in that little hamlet we found some very good things indeed.

Before we left we had a second and less fragmentary interview with Sarah Turner herself, which brought us into interesting knowledge of the villagers and their methods of life and thought. I was going up the hill one morning, when I saw Sarah in her door-way beckoning most mysteriously to me. As I went up to her, she said in a sort of whisper,—

"Would you just stop in here, ma'am? I've something to shou'ee."

I entered her clean, sanded room, and then she called my attention to a really beautiful tall old clock. It was precisely what I had been looking for; and so, first enjoining upon me not to tell her sister, she bargained with me for it. It was fixed to the wall, and she said she didn't know *how*, as it had been there since her grandfather's time. After some deliberation, she remarked that there was a watchmaker in the village, who might be able to assist us.

I thought the better plan was to let him see it first, and so Mrs. Turner started off with me to find him. As we walked through the village she informed several neighbors, indolently

standing in their door-ways, that I meant to buy her clock, a piece of news which seemed to interest everybody, and I recollect two or three people saying, "Why, won't it go, Mrs. Turner?" The watchmaker had his shop in one deep, bulging window of his little cottage, and the only implements of his trade were two large silver timepieces of the turnip style and period and some broken pieces of jewelry. He was a tall, pale young man, and was eating his dinner with his young wife at one end of the work-table when we went in. Mrs. Turner looked round her for some time after entering, evidently anxious to make the visit profitable by some remarks on other subjects before she explained our errand; but at last she said in an apologetic tone that she thought the clock might as well come down one time as another, to which the watchmaker's wife said it were always a good thing once in a while to look at the works of any clock. Mrs. Turner said with some asperity at this that she guessed the clock would keep time in that village as long as anybody needed it. The conversation might have become personal, but that the young man said he would undertake to look at the clock directly, and, glancing at his wife, said that he really thought to go up there would be worth a shilling. When I expressed my entire readiness to meet this demand he came away with us up to the village, where on all sides we were regarded much as if we had secured the services of an undertaker. Sarah Turner fell back now and then to whisper items of interest to her admiring friends, but she was a little dashed to find on our entering her room that her sister was seated there.

"Sarah Turner," that lady asked, with an evident effort at self-control, "what is this I hear?"

Mrs. Turner looked for an instant like a person driven to bay. "Yes," she said, "I decided to sell this lady my clock: she's going to give a fair price for it, and George Hobbs will look into it now."

The presence of a capable tradesman

about to ply his craft before her very eyes seemed to have a subduing effect upon Sarah Turner's sister, for she said nothing for a few moments, though in her silence was a fine air of disapproval while the young man took down the clock. When it appeared that it must all come to pieces before it could be got away from the wall, poor Sarah Turner fared badly at her sister's hand, for she was reproached with every stroke made by the watchmaker. Finally I ventured to say that the clock was mine, and that if I didn't object to its being taken to pieces no one else should, whereupon Mrs. Turner's sister left the room with the air of a person who must refuse to countenance the unlawful proceedings. She turned back to say that she hoped her sister would think twice before she made such a poor fool of herself again. When we had the clock ready to be taken away, a message reached me from another house,—the young widow's,—urging me to step in there before I left. I went in, and was speedily surrounded by all the jolly little family, while the mother offered me various bits of really good china and delft. Some of it was a pretty old blue. There was a quaint bowl, which if not actually dragon was nearly as interesting. How had these poor people come by these pieces of porcelain and pottery? Evidences of thrift they could not be, nor did the widow's poverty-stricken, disorderly little household suggest their being heirlooms; but she readily gave the history of these possessions. Her mother had left her the tea-cups, and the other things had been her "man's" mother's. No sentiment whatever seemed to exist about them, and our purchase was not affected by the least feeling of wounded delicacy.

It was not till we had collected several articles of furniture and china that it occurred to us to inquire into a mode of getting them to the railway-station, which was about a mile and a half distant. It thereupon appeared that the village did not possess a single conveyance which we could hire for such a purpose. I inquired whether there was no express-

wagon anywhere to be found. Such a thing was not heard of. I then fell back upon my knowledge of English country ways, and asked if a carrier's cart could be found. One, I was told, went by every second week on its way to Exeter; but that would mean waiting ten days. Here was a predicament. In the soft yellow twilight we stood on the steps of the building trying to extract from the little group about us some information or assistance as to ways and means. As well speak to the birds of the air. Ideas were general enough, but all significant of the entirely primitive condition of things in the village. At last, Sarah Turner's sister—who, still maintaining her air of severity, condescended to join the company—remarked that Joel somebody had a cart. Sarah at once interposed that he had no horse,—it was a hand-cart, and one wheel was gone; moreover, Joel's hand was paralyzed. As mildly and calmly as I could, I asked how they moved anything about when necessary. Wheelbarrows, was the prompt reply. It seemed an ignominious method of leaving the village: still, it was a relief to hear of some way out of the difficulty, and in a few moments I had engaged the services of three boys with three wheelbarrows, and we began to pack the things upon the latter as well as we could. I think I shall never forget the picture which I saw from the steps of the old house,—the hilly roadside, with its curious vestiges of antiquity, the houses opposite frowning beneath mediæval roofs, and to the left a sunny downward stretch of meadow-land, with a very peaceful church and church-yard at one side. A yew hedge skirted this, and next to it came a building on whose steps a little anxious group of people were gathered about me, while out in the stronger sunlight, the last of the fast-waning day, were the wheelbarrows, on which my, to their eyes, worthless possessions were being piled up, looking as though some one had left me a very miscellaneous sort of legacy.

Everybody in the neighborhood had grown nervously interested over my de-

parture, and the little boys received no end of suggestions as to the best method of doing things. It was then that Sarah Turner's sister surpassed herself in one sentence. She stood near her own doorway, and, just before I left, she smiled, and said very calmly, "I see, ma'am, you're in the second-hand business; I know it, for I've seen 'em before."

I have always felt certain that I left that village classified forever in the public mind.

As we proceeded down the road I had a very funny time with the people, who had heard of our purchases and who darted out of their door-ways offering old objects of any kind or description. Did they consider me in the light of a harmless lunatic, I wonder? Or did they simply accept a state of things for which their own minds or experience offered neither precedent nor explanation? I shall always retain a vision of one young woman who ran down the hill with a great yellow bowl in her hands to say she would sell it for three-pence. It was the ordinary yellow crockery bowl common to any kitchen, but in a very exultant way she called upon me to see how very "annient" it was. And I may as well say here that early the next morning I was awakened by the chambermaid of our inn, who said a boy wished to see me about a chair. On going down-stairs I found a youth with a very dilapidated steamer-chair, which he informed me he would like to sell, and he assured me, quite unnecessarily, that it was nearly worn out, as a gentleman who had lodged with his mother three years before had left it behind him, and he brought it up, hearing as how I was 'untin' for rubbishin' sort o' things.

How we reached the station and deposited the contents of our wheelbarrows on a freight-car I cannot tell in detail, for my memory is full of various humiliating incidents connected with it. But I may as well mention here that the ultimate result was most satisfactory, that Sarah Turner's clock was not only well put together again but that it goes to this day perfectly, that the china

ornaments a certain drawing-room with very good effect, and that the old chair has been found a model of form for desk-purposes, having the most comfortable, sensible, and, as artistic friends would say, sincere sort of back and arms to it.

Through all that southerly journey in England we found that in the poorest household some pieces of excellent furniture had been handed down; and it is by no means uncommon to find in a poor cottage a capital oaken sideboard, secretary, or chair well worthy an artist's study or a place of honor in a fine room. Of course it is not always easy to drive a bargain; yet you can usually induce the owners to sell at a fair price. Good old chests are growing rarer every day, although ten years ago they were so plentiful that they might have been picked up anywhere for five dollars. The regular bric-à-brac dealers have pretty thoroughly searched England by this time, but the result has been in a certain sense gratifying, so far as their customers are concerned, since now in many towns one finds well-established shops where one can get precisely what one wants; and if "picking up" has grown to be a fine art, dealers recognize a connoisseur very quickly, and it is very hard to be imposed upon. There are houses belonging to people of "lang pedigree" but very moderate means where valuable pieces of oak or inlaid work are known by the dealers to exist, sometimes mouldering in attics or adding solemnity to some dim and rarely-used apartment; and, though there is a strong disinclination to part with such things, the shrewd dealer generally bides his time, sure of a finally successful result. In one instance which I have in mind, a fire breaking out in an old manor-house resulted in the sale of a quantity of antique furniture which was supposed to be much damaged, but was easily repaired and brought a famous price. We saw the articles, aching to buy one grand old press, every inch of which was worth gold, but a royal customer had bespoken it. When we saw these things they occupied a place of honor in the long gal-leried portion of a shop in Surrey,—a

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place in itself worth many an hour's inspection and owned by a man who is undoubtedly the head of his profession in England. Back of the main store were rooms filled with delightful objects. The rooms themselves had a special charm, for they formed part of a famous old house which in its half-decayed condition Mr. C—— had rented. The ceilings were fine specimens of ornamental work; the great bow-window, with its diamond panes of glass, its exquisite framework and artistic form, looked out upon what had once been a charming garden, rich in sward and oak-trees, and with a terrace still gay with flowers that reminded one of a century ago. The house, falling into a condition of worn-out obscurity, had been to let, we were told, for years before our friend purchased the lease; and assuredly he could hardly have found a worthier repository for his wares.

Some of the bric-à-brac dealers are curious characters, themselves nearly as interesting as the objects they have to sell, and their tales are replete with the most entertaining facts and data of old families that add a fascination to one's purchases and enhance their value when the piece of oak or bit of tapestry is in one's own more prosaic apartment. Only once did we come upon a piece of furniture connected with a ghost,—perhaps, to be accurate and respectful enough, we should say belonging to a ghost. The story, briefly told us one September afternoon while we lingered in the upper room of a queer little shop, was as follows.

A family long noted in a certain part of Kent for various peculiarities had finally dwindled down from large numbers to one small household of three persons,—an old man, his son, and grand-daughter. Although living in a fine old family house with every external sign of wealth, they were in reality very poor, and the singular part of it was that a former owner of the house had been reputed wealthy, although known to be a miser. But his death left no traces of money save such traditions as the people heard from time to time.

Up-stairs in a half-forgotten room was an old oaken chest, carved and hinged and bound in brass. It was too long before the day for such things to be revived to have it considered worth noticing or bringing into prominence; but in the mean while, from what occurred later, we may suppose that the ghost of the old tenant of the house was having rather a bad time of it, since the young lady of the family, going into the room toward dusk one evening, found him patiently sitting on the ancient coffer. Great consternation ensued. Liké a well-bred ghost, he vanished on being seen, to reappear, however, on various occasions, until it was decided to remove the chest to another room. He followed, and tormented the family. In despair, his descendants knocked the chest to pieces. A secret drawer or slide was thereby discovered, in which—so runs the story—were rolls upon rolls of gold. Naturally enough, prosperity ensued, but the chest was sold, and fell into the hands of the dealer who showed it to us, telling the tale connected with it with many a sly shake of the head and a chuckle of disbelief in so romantic a story.

Between England and the Continent we found that all such experiences are tinged by precisely the sort of differences which distinguish everything in English and foreign-speaking countries. A genuine bric-à-brac shop on the Continent certainly has a charm not to be found in England or America. Do we not know the peculiar joy of turning down some narrow street and finding a long window full of the familiar symbols of the trade within,—the bits of brass and armor, the finely-colored or richly-hued splendors of drapery, the old pictures jumbled up with Sèvres and cobweb laces, and perhaps precious stones shining on small saucers, jaspers and hyacinths, moonstones and sapphires, all together? I think it is safe, however, to say that nine such shops out of ten on the Continent are conducted on the most fraudulent principles; but the tenth repays your search,—and for my own part there is no spot more fascinating than

the abode of a genuine dealer in antiquities in Germany or the south of France, or in some parts of Spain or Italy. Our first experience of Continental purchases after the ordinary ones in Paris was in a town where everything was so old that every piece of antiquity seemed to defy inspection; for why should not every such thing be genuine in an old country shut in by fortresses and mediæval castles and inhabited by a people who dressed as though the seventeenth century had not vanished from the books of time?

It was a strange, fascinating, pathetic little town. The river flowed beneath an arched stone bridge, where on market-days the people gathered in strongly-colored groups, while around the high lights of this prominent point reigned the mournfulness of a deeply-wooded, dark-toned country. The sunlight seemed fierce enough wherever it decided to illumine anything, but out of its glory one would come upon spots so deeply shadowed that it seemed as though nothing that bold, gay sky could do would ever waken a response.

It was in many respects a typical French town, and yet the national alacrity and desire for change had not so far influenced it, for I observed that people talked of Paris as an unattainable good. Every evening, when that warm, strong sun set above the river, the carriage belonging to the old castle drove through the place with the genuine "blare" of mediæval times, and people leaned forth from their windows like so many animated groups in Froissart. White cap nodded to white cap, and the little military band strode past groups that seemed ready to serve any painter whose mind had absorbed enough of the characteristic elements of the place.

Necessarily in such a town one must guard against a too easy rendering of the critical faculty to a dealer in antiquities, and perhaps we felt this a sort of moral force working protectively around us, for we did not venture into any shop until we had acquainted ourselves not only with the town but with our own pulsa-

tions whenever some effect of romance and quaint simplicity urged us.

Near to our hotel was a little shop with steps which dipped and turned down from the street in a most irregular fashion. Its owner would come out of a fine morning and sit sunning himself in a large leathern chair, neither inviting nor courting custom, rather with the manner of a person who knew his own importance. One day, while looking up and down the street from under his shaggy eyebrows, he dangled in his hand a pair of queer old spurs, and this afforded us our first excuse for talking to him. He said he had been polishing the spurs. They were really silver, and at least two hundred years old: would we descend? We went down the funny little flight of steps and found ourselves in a really charming place. There were all sorts of odd things. There was nothing, I think, of the conventional bric-à-brac-shop sort, or at least things were not arranged as we were accustomed to seeing them. There seemed to be fragments of everything,—parts of old clocks, and harnesses, and furniture, with here and there some marvellously good things in the way of drapery.

When we asked him if he had this or that,—such things as we usually expected in such a shop,—he would only cast up his hands and shrug his shoulders in a kind of amused horror. "Oh, no; go to some one else," he would reply. "I—myself—it is I who can give you specimens." And specimens this dear old man certainly possessed. He had a mania for what was typical, and it mattered not to him whether any bit of carving or of color in brass or jewel were incomplete, so long as it expressed a phase of art or a sentiment connected with its period or with its original possessor. To him a piece of oak wrought out with a certain design was worth anything elaborate you could mention. Opposite his shop was a larger and more florid place, where really excellent things were to be had, yet about it was an air of trade which made our purchases less fascinating, if more methodical. It was the conventional repository, and, as in

many other French places of the kind, we found exquisite small pieces of drapery and some fragments of tapestry which were perfect in color if not always in substance; the blues and greens, with saffron-tinged yellows, were quite remarkable, and, I have since been told, more valuable than we even knew at the time. "Madame," the energetic shopkeeper, was a large, dark, clean-looking person, with very long ear-rings and a huge brooch, everything about her ample and diffusive, and she certainly was entertaining when one drew her out upon the history of her stores. There were some wonderful satin bed-linings which had come from one of the old castles sold not long since in that richly-castellated neighborhood. The ground-work of these hangings had faded to a delicious creamy tint, and a pattern which made one say, "Oh, South Kensington!" was wrought upon it in pale blue and saffrons and reds. These pieces madame had a cruelly tantalizing way of dangling up and down in the dim end of her shop, while she assured us the price she put upon them was "as nothing for them."

We were still so impressed by an idea of purchasing costumes directly from the people that in this little town we soon began to watch the homelier natives with a view to finding out what heirlooms they possessed. And the result was some very quaint acquisitions; above all, some caps worth searching a whole day for. The prettiest and most original of these we purchased directly from its wearer, one of the most captivating of Frenchwomen, who enchanted us for half an hour by her vivacity and drollery before she sold us the cap. She wore it in a very picturesque fashion, the strings bound up peculiarly, and so we asked her to show us precisely how it ought to be worn, whereupon she laughed gayly, and, with that inimitable air to be seen only in one of her race, exclaimed, "Hold! but this is droll. I have always been a noted one for just the touch I can give my cap. I am thirty years of age now, but since I was sixteen this is the same. As a

girl, in the country where I lived there was not one could approach my manner of this kind. How the girls in the place envied me!"

And, standing before the mirror in her cool parlor, the little Frenchwoman snatched off her cap and readjusted it in a manner certainly not to be imitated, turning upon us the most sparkling of black eyes and a smile that showed the whitest of teeth. I never look at that little lace cap without a picture of the square room, with its bright adornments and shaded windows, the figure before the mirror reproducing the air of the girl of fourteen years before with all the coquetry of youth. Across the courtyard, a vista of old-time mediæval glories for the house, had been an ancient monastery. It was now in the possession of a noble family who rarely crossed its threshold, and the little Frenchwoman acted as *concierge*. We were allowed to go up-stairs and saunter about at our leisure in the stone galleries that overlooked a deserted court, where once upon a time, however, Francis I. had been solemnly received in state. There was a long and interesting room,—a refectory, I suppose,—and just within it a curious little cabinet, or study, which had once been devoted to the alchemic and scientific investigations of a former owner of the house. The existence of this room had been known in his day only to the steward of the house and its master, the door being a secret one in the wall and the window looking out on a sort of hall, beyond which was an outer wall with a second window set in, through which nothing of the interior could be seen. It was such a sunshiny morning that it seemed hard to think of anything like misery or crime as connected with the old building; yet sad stories exist as to what happened within those walls, the most pathetic being that of a beautiful daughter of the house who was condemned to languish there for her refusal to marry one of Francis I.'s most villanous courtiers. There was the window of her room, the bars showing here and there behind a mass and tangle of green, and while

we looked up at it a flutter of pigeons started from under the eaves.

Far away down in the Basque country we found our ideal vender of bric-à-brac,—certainly a shop that fulfilled our most romantic ideas as to what such a place in a Spanish country should be. It was in no way pretentious; in fact, our first view of it revealed only a row of leathern-covered chairs and the flash of steel in one little window. But the joy of that place was in its day by day unfolding new treasures to our view, while the owner was one of the most fascinating of men, his old face a network of wrinkles when he smiled, and his eyes dancing merrily as he talked, his language being a mixture of French and Spanish and Basque, with here and there the most unexpected and out-of-the-way English expressions. He fairly revelled in his own possessions, and would caress the old stuffs he brought out for our inspection lovingly, seeming to take an exquisite satisfaction in the way the lights and shades came and went upon them. His shop fronted the main street of the town, but it was built with various twists and turns; and one day, when we thought we had exhausted his entire stock as well as his fund of narrative, he met us with twinkling eyes and asked us if we would like to see his official room upstairs. We went up the very quaintest of old staircases, lighted by a long, low window, whose only drapery was a strip of green and red silk fringe, and into a big gloomy room literally filled with articles of almost priceless value. It is painful as well as pleasant to recall the treasures of that room: the curious cabinets, rare boxes, bits of oak and ivory and shining fine-grained rosewood, the laces and draperies, the wonderful "bits" of stuff which were brought out into the flickering patch of sunlight on the floor, made the dusky room vibrate. There was the flash of brass and steel

in unexpected places; a strange old picture, Spanish in tone and type, looked down upon us from one end of the long room,—a pale, olive-tinted face out of some forgotten long ago, with sad, questioning eyes beneath dark hair and a cavalier's hat. Against a tall open-back chair monsieur had flung a red silk cloak of the eighteenth century, which had a haughty air of its own, as though proud of its dead-and-gone bearer. And I recall also how well some old Spanish jewelry looked gleaming on a round table where faded strips of yellow satin had been thrown down, strong in color although they were against emphatic shadows.

With such surroundings the commonplace seemed to vanish completely. By the time we were ready to leave, we had thought out a dozen curious stories of the past, and the big shadowy room seemed peopled with phantoms only chased from our mental vision by the prosaic animation of the street into which we emerged. There the concentrated hour of the day's enjoyment in the town had begun. It was five o'clock: the band was playing merrily, and people were strolling up and down in groups of twos and threes under the trees, while beyond the sea lay placid and golden, the beach broken here and there by fisher-people and their boats. Our old friend followed us down-stairs slowly, hugging his keys and smiling to himself with intensest satisfaction. He made a wonderfully good picture, we agreed, looking back at him, and thinking of his strange and fascinating room, with all its visions of a by-gone time. We took a good look at him, for it was to be our last. He stood still, smiling good-humoredly and shrewdly, standing framed in the doorway of his dusky shop, and making what Mr. Whistler might have called a chord in brown and yellow.

LUCY C. LILLIE.

MERRY CHRISTMAS.

IT was all very well for Mr. Cleve to declare that this year at least there should be no nonsense of presents and trees and family parties and fuss generally; that the Christmas festival had become a bit of paganism and had not enough heart in it to redeem it from the vulgarity of a debit-and-credit account; that if women and children were fools over it he wasn't, and he hoped he was master in his own house, and there was the end of it.

But there was not the end of it at all, since he had reckoned without his wife; and if there was one thing in the world Mrs. Cleve's heart was more set on than another, it was a proper observance of Christmas. She had been brought up in it,—parties, and trees, and midnight service, and pine odors which, figuratively speaking, lasted the year through. And if, remembering sad experiences of aches and pains with the children, and things harder to bear with their eldest, she might subscribe to her husband's ideas in January, she never could in December. "For the children's sakes, you know, dear," she urged. "I want them to grow up in all the sweet traditions of the time, the—"

"Traditions of fiddlesticks!" cried Mr. Cleve. "The children are not such fools as to believe in Santa Claus. Tom knew well enough last year who gave him his drum and velocipede, and he's given notice already that he wants roller-skates this year. And as for the real story of Christmas, I don't believe you ever yet found time to tell it to them, with all the worry and work you get yourself into over their presents."

"And you can have the heart to disappoint the dear little fellow!" cried Mrs. Cleve, ignoring all the rest. "I'm ashamed of you, John; and I'm sure if I had ever thought that of you—"

"Now, Maria," Mr. Cleve said warningly, "you are not to take up that everlasting tune. What if I haven't

turned out just the husband you expected? I might say something on my side over that, and you know well enough—"

"Oh, I know well enough that you're disappointed in me," cried little Mrs. Cleve, and her eyes flashed and there was an hysterical sob rising in her throat, for she never could get angry without crying, well as she knew that this always capped the climax with her husband. "You've told me so often enough, I'm sure. You've made my life miserable with your everlasting tales of the first Mrs. Cleve; and if it were not for the children—" And here she broke down altogether and ran out of the room, and Mr. Cleve had to take his car, for he was late already, and went off anathematizing alternately his wife's folly and his own. And so the festival of peace and good will began with a family quarrel.

But of course Mr. Cleve made his peace when he came home that night, for he really loved this delicate, hysterical wife, the mother of his three pretty children; loved her perhaps—after the fashion of men nowadays—more than that darling of his youth who had only stayed a year with him and who had faded now to a dim and distant guardian angel in a dim and distant world. He had, too, a good-humored tenderness for his wife's sensitiveness to her position as second love. *She* had never cared for any one else, and she had left a home where she was an idolized child to console his grief; and so she sometimes told him, *via* her mother. Mr. Cleve knew, forecasting the future from the past, that if peace was not speedily made Mrs. Cleve would go home for the day with the children, and he would have the choice of a lonely dinner and evening or a visit to his father-in-law's in the rôle of repentant husband.

"Confound Christmas!" he groaned, as he waited on the corner for his car; and he read his paper coming up, thinking all the while what he should say to

appease the domestic deities. Mrs. Cleve was not in the hall to give him his usual welcome, and he went straight to her own room, where he knew he should find her.

"Come, now, Marie,"—he always said Marie when they quarrelled and Marie when they made up,—“I'm sorry if I hurt your feelings this morning. You know I didn't mean it.” He chose this vague confession as best adapted to sins he was not aware of. “I'm willing to be reasonable about Christmas, but last year the children made themselves sick over candy and quarrelled over their presents till they were all broken, and you weren't satisfied with what I gave you, and your mother said—”

“Oh, how can you speak so of dear, dear mamma?” cried his wife, and then Mr. Cleve knew that his last state was worse than his first.

“But I haven't said a word, my dear,” he cried.

“But you were going to; you know you were. And she is planning such a pretty present for you this year,—she told me so only last week; and I had been thinking of a silver clock for her room,—a chiming one, of course, for I know she wants one. She's done so much for us, and it's such a pleasure to give Christmas-presents, and it only comes once a year, and I should think if you cared for me all you say—”

“Heaven be praised that it only comes once a year!” Mr. Cleve interrupted. “There would be no enduring it if it came oftener. There, there, Marie! I know I'm a heathen and a publican, but I'm not quite the brute you profess to think me.”

“Profess, indeed! And to bring up that I wasn't satisfied last year, when you weren't a bit better pleased with what I gave you, though I'd tired my eyes nearly to death working it.”

“And I'm willing to give you any reasonable sum,” he went on, ignoring this parenthesis,—“if you think Christmas must be observed.”

“Oh, as to that,” Mrs. Cleve's head came up and her tone changed, “I don't mean to be extravagant, John. I

know times are hard. I've gone without a new cloak this winter, you've said so much about them, and I shall only give presents where it is *absolutely needful*, and *just enough* to be decent, I can assure you.”

“Brava, my dear!” Mr. Cleve said. “That's the true Christmas spirit. But to how many will it be indecent not to give?”

“There's mamma, and papa, and the two girls at home, we must have something handsome for them of course, and your married sister, and Aunt Julia,—she always sends the children things, you know, and, though half the time it's nothing of any use, still it makes a claim,—and Cousin George, and the Milwards, because they remembered us last year, and Ada Haye, because she's going to marry George, and the children, and servants, and—and—I shall only send Christmas-cards to the rest,” she finished, with Spartan resolution.

“And how much do you suppose all that will take? And if I give it to you will you promise to buy things outright, and not drag your life out embroidering and crocheting and painting and all the rest of it, as you did last year? It was a wonder you didn't make yourself sick; and I might as well have been a widower again, for all the society I had from you for a month before. Spare me that this year at least, my dear.”

And so peace was made by Mr. Cleve's signing a check that would have bought his wife's cloak twice over; and so he said as he handed it over.

“Oh, I don't mind about the cloak now,” cried Mrs. Cleve. “I can get along, at least for the present. And they will be so much lower after New Year's. It's a real economy to wait. And, besides, there's always a chance I may get it Christmas. I shall give papa a hint about it. Last year he gave me Prescott's works, and I've never yet had time to read them, and I'd much rather have something to wear.” From which Mr. Cleve divined easily that if papa failed on the cloak he was expected to fill the breach.

Mrs. Cleve had, after all, made no promises on her presents, but her intentions were excellent. She had nearly worked herself into a fever the year before, and had said then that, if it ruined them, she would never, never again try to make her Christmas-things. It was all very well to talk about its being so much nicer to give something all one's own: her present ideal was to buy outright. But she came home from her first round of shopping pensive and undecided. Things were so frightfully dear. It was plain she hadn't money enough, and she couldn't ask for more; that was in the bond. Besides, sister May had expressly stated that she wanted a five-o'clock-tea-cloth in ferns and daffodils; and why pay an extravagant price for it when her own clever fingers could make it at half the expense?

"And I may as well tell you beforehand," May had added, "that, if you mean to give mamma anything, a copy of that lovely plaque in your sitting-room would exactly suit her. Of course that's only a suggestion; but if people mean to give things I think it's just as well to have them right. It's so aggravating to get things you don't care for or can't use."

"But I've promised Mr. Cleve not to make anything," the lady said distressfully. "Dear me! isn't there anything else? And that reminds me I want you to find out what Cousin George wants; it's so hard to suit gentlemen. And I had settled on a majolica dragon-jar for Aunt Julia,—you know she's crazy over such things,—but there's the express, double extra, and something I could send through the mail would be so much better. Do suggest something, May."

"Why, there are so many pretty things in the shops, I should think it would be easy enough to find something as long as you have money. We girls only have twenty dollars apiece, and we had to tease to get that out of papa. Nell is wearing her eyes out over her things; she sat up till two o'clock last night over the portière in

arrasene she's making for mamma; and she wouldn't see Tom Gray when he called last week,—said she hadn't a minute to spare,—and he went off in high dudgeon and took Ada Haye to the opera instead of Nell; and now George is jealous and mamma put out with Nell, and I've the task of making peace. They're not engaged, you know,—Nell and Tom; if they were it would be easier,—but it's just about as settled, and mamma's heart is quite set on it. We all know Nell likes him, and he hasn't looked at another girl for a year."

And over an eager discussion of this new theme Mrs. Cleve forgot her Christmas perplexities; but they came back in full force the next time she went shopping. She came home so tired and worried that she proved a poor companion to Mr. Cleve that evening, and was fain to excuse her silence and pre-occupation on the score of a touch of neuralgia in her head.

"Now, Maria," Mr. Cleve said warningly, "whatever you do, don't get neuralgia fastened on you for the winter. It's Christmas-shopping, I know, and you'd better let it rest a few days. There's time enough."

"And things are always cheaper just at the last," Mrs. Cleve added thoughtfully, "and I shall know better what people want. That's always the hardest part of Christmasing." And to herself she finished, "And that will give me a chance to do some work at home. It won't take any more time or be a bit more fatiguing than rushing about in those crowded stores day after day; and half the things one buys in such a jam are wrong when you get home. I'll go to-morrow to the art-rooms for the tea-cloth and the panel, and material for a pretty zephyr shawl for Aunt Julia. I can do it evenings, and Mr. Cleve will never notice."

And, having thus cleared her mind, Mrs. Cleve had once more an ear for her husband, and could presently tell him of Nell's trouble and propose asking Tom Gray to dinner next week, and have her sister down and see if there—

"But Tom has gone out of town," Mr. Cleve answered at this stage of the planning. "I told you so at dinner, and I thought then you didn't seem much interested. I met him this afternoon, and he told me he had business at the West, and might as well go now as any time, since there would be no getting near Nellie till Christmas was over."

"Did he say that, John?" cried Mrs. Cleve. "Then he must have understood perfectly why Nell couldn't see him that evening. And how could he go and take Ada Haye out just to torment the poor child? I wouldn't have thought it of Tom Gray."

"But really, my dear," Mr. Cleve answered, taking up the cudgels for his sex, "you can't expect miracles of a man. And, now I think of it, it was my suggestion that Nell was buried just now in Christmas doings. I told him it ran in the family, and that you were never good for much at this time; and he brightened immensely at the idea," Mr. Cleve went on, ignoring his wife's reproachful glance at this base slander, "and said if he had known that he should have tried to call again before he went off, but now he should write and try to settle things; perhaps she could get time to read a brief letter—it should be very brief, in deference to the season—and telegraph an answer. And so you may dismiss that care, my dear. Tom's a good fellow, and if he gets back in time he's to dine here Christmas."

"But we are all to go to papa's to dinner," Mrs. Cleve said. "Surely I told you that. And, by the bye, Uncle James and his wife are to be there, and I feel as though we ought to get them something." And therewith the whole load rolled back on her shoulders.

It was three weeks to the dreadful day. Mrs. Cleve fancied she had begun early enough this time not to be hurried. But there was the housekeeping, as usual, and the days were so short, and ten-year-old Grace wanted to make presents, too, and must be helped on the toilet-mats she was crocheting for

grandma and the bed-slippers for papa; and, of course, just when it was most inconvenient the nurse-maid must be summoned home by a sick mother, so that for a week—till a new one came—she had all the care of the children. She was much too busy evenings with Aunt Julia's shawl to really listen to her husband's reading of the paper; and as for the music he liked afterward, and the romp with the little folks before they went to bed, they were not to be thought of. It was the old story, and Mr. Cleve submitted to the inevitable,—meals less carefully prepared than usual, a wife out shopping when he came home, and the children's talk, when he fell back on them for amusement, all of what they wanted, and the Christmas-tree at the Sunday-school, and please would papa give them some more money for their presents. Papa emptied his purse of pennies every night, gave up all expectations of sensible talk from his wife, and groaned to himself, "Well, we always have lived through it, and I hope we shall this time." But he was not so sure of it when, a week before Christmas, a party of cousins came in to do shopping,—things were so much cheaper in the city,—and quartered themselves on them. It was not according to his ideas of hospitality to have his house thus turned into a hotel, and so he said, with some emphasis, to his wife.

"Good heavens, John! don't get into a family quarrel at Christmas of all times," she answered. "They will go away in a day or two,—at least I hope so, for I'm nearly distracted with the added work, and if it weren't for her expectations in the way of presents I'm sure the cook would have left at sight of them. She is looking for some hard cash from you, my dear, Christmas morning. I meant to give her a dress, but I really can't make it out. I shall buy a big white apron, and you can put a bill in the pocket, and I hope," she finished plaintively, "that that will satisfy her."

"And how much does the nurse-girl expect, and the postman, and the news-

boy?" Mr. Cleve demanded. "Peace and good will, indeed! It takes too entirely a financial mode of expression. I hope I shall not be quite ruined. I suppose you would like some more money, Maria. I never yet knew you to have enough." And here was a nice little quarrel on hand again, and the salve to his wife's wounded feelings was another check.

The cousins went off the day before Christmas, and Mrs. Ashton and the two girls came down the same morning for a last round of shopping. They must give the day to it and lunch down town, they said, though Mrs. Cleve did not like to leave the children so long. The first snow had come, and they were wild for sledding, and, though their street was quiet, Mrs. Cleve was always nervous about the carts and wagons passing at the corner, and the near railway-station. She gave special charges to the new nurse-maid, and, as she kissed them good-by, added a final, "Now be good children and mind Hattie, or Santa may not bring you anything."

"Ho!" cried seven-year-old Tom, "there ain't any Santa! But I say, ma, I want a gun, and if you don't promise me that—"

"And you won't forget my dolly-house, mamma?" cried Grace.

"An' me wants a dolly," put in baby Alice. And Mrs. Cleve promised everything, to keep the peace.

"I wish one could keep up the childish fancy of Santa Claus longer," she said regretfully to her mother. "Only last night I heard them wondering if their Sunday-school teacher would give them fringed cards. And that reminds me that I haven't enough cards myself. There are a half-dozen people I must send nice ones to,—the Alstons, and the Fords, and Tom Gray—" But here a warning glance cut short her list.

"You needn't send anything to him," her mother whispered. "Not a word has Nell heard. I'm afraid he's all out with her; and yet it was such a little thing. But the truth is he was as jealous as possible for a month before he went away. We thought he would get over it; he's

had time enough. And after what you said he told John, Nell had a right to expect a letter; she's looked for one every day, and if she weren't so wrapt up in Christmas-things just now she would feel it more, and as it is you can see—" And certainly Mrs. Cleve could see that her sister was pale and worn and hollow-eyed; but whether it was sleepless nights over love's young dream or the arrasene portière was not so clear to her.

Oh, the crowding and pushing and pulling in the shops, the struggle to be served, the eternity one had to wait for change, the impossibility of getting things sent home, and the consequent burdened and breathless condition of everybody! Twice Mrs. Ashton nearly had her pocket picked in the *mêlée*, and just at the last Nell fainted in an overheated candy-store to which they had gone for the sweetness needed, in their eyes, to complete Christmas joys. They called a carriage, and, as the others had still a few commissions, Mrs. Cleve was fain to take her direct to her own home, promising that John should escort her back later. For there were a score of things yet to see to, and if she had any strength left she wanted to go to the early church service the next day. The decorations and the music would be lovely,—they always were at St. Philip's,—and, besides, it gave one a chance to think about what it all meant. She hoped she was not quite a heathen, though she had not been to church for a fortnight, she was so tired, and of course had not had a moment to read her Bible. As they rolled homeward, the noise of the carriage making conversation difficult, she had a chance to think of this, though the reflection was sandwiched between a calculation of what she had spent that day and the wonder if John would notice the materials of his dressing-gown in the New-Year's bills. Of course not, or, if he did, she could tell him honestly that she had put work enough besides into it. And was the poor fellow sitting solitary at home now, or romping with the children like a good father?

Only the children were sure to be tired and cross; they always played too hard if she were not there to see to them. And had Hattie remembered her orders about the sledding? But here the carriage rolled into a quieter street, and she heard Nell's voice:

"I suppose I'm a goose, Marie, but there'll be no Christmas for me till I've made it up with Tom. And how I'm to do it—and why I was so silly as to refuse to see him that evening—is more than I can tell. My head and heart were all in that dreadful portière, and I hope mamma will appreciate the fact that all my happiness has been sacrificed to it."

And then Nell was crying, and her sister had enough to do to comfort her with the assurance that after Christmas one might hope for time to explain matters. Perhaps he had been too busy to write, or perhaps something—

"Oh, yes," Nell cried hysterically, "perhaps something has happened to him out West, you mean. I've thought of that often enough the last few nights, for with these crowded Christmas-trains there's always more risk of accident, they say; and if anything should come between us now I should never forgive myself; and I wish—I wish—"

"That Christmas was safely over," laughed Mrs. Cleve. "John would agree with you there, dear. But now, thank goodness, we're home at last."

But she had time to wonder, while she paid the driver an extra price, "because o' the season, ma'am," why the house was so dark and still, and why, when she rang, it was so long before any one came to the door.

"I dare say the cook is waiting for the nurse, and the nurse for the cook," she said fretfully to her sister, "and John has very likely gone to the club to dine. He's been threatening that every day for a week. As if I could be expected to oversee everything at such a time! But men are the *most wildly unreasonable* creatures; and if I didn't suppose you were in love with Tom Gray I should be tempted to congratulate you—" But here the door opened.

As the two stepped into the dimly-lighted hall they saw that their usher was little Grace, and that Master Tom was behind, and both children in tears.

"What on earth is the matter?" cried Mrs. Cleve; "and where's your papa, and the servants, and the baby?"

"He's gone,—gone for a policeman," sobbed Grace. "The baby's lost, and Hattie run away when she found it out, she was so frightened, and the cook's got company down-stairs; and, oh, mamma! do you s'pose we'll ever, ever find her?"

Mrs. Cleve sank into a chair and let all her bundles drop. "When—where—how?" she gasped; and from the children's disjointed tale it appeared that the new maid had not guarded them as she promised. They had gone round the corner to a candy-shop, and then after a man with a dancing dog; and there was a crowd, and "lots of horses," as Tom declared, and they crossed the street, only to find out presently that little Alice was not with them. That was a long time ago, Grace added, and they had hunted everywhere before they came home; and then Hattie had gone out to hunt, and they guessed now she was lost too, for she hadn't come back.

"And papa said naughty words when he come and we told him," Tom finished; "and then he told us to stay here and tell you. And it was all dark, and we cried; and the cook's got company, and we haven't had any dinner."

But when Mrs. Cleve descended to the kitchen she found Bridget discussing her share of the dinner with a friend: "It's me cousin from the country, ma'am; come in fur a bit o' Christmas an' the airly mass, ye see. An' I thought it a pity the foiner roast should spile, an' Mither Cleve not knowin' if he'd be back the night. But I'll be servin' it up to ye to once, ma'am,—for ye must be nigh kilt with the worry an' all."

But Mrs. Cleve had no heart for her dinner, no thought for anything now except her darling wandering about those crowded streets in the snow, or perhaps carried off by some one. Nell forgot her own fatigue and disappointment in try-

ing to quiet her hysterical sister. And presently it was discovered that the children, left to themselves, had opened the Christmas-packages and were revelling in their sweets.

"It don't matter now," sobbed Mrs. Cleve. "Nothing matters now. But, oh, there's the doll I bought for the darling! and to think where she may be now! Oh, why don't John come? Indeed, indeed, I must do something myself. I shall go up to papa's. He ought to know; and perhaps—it's just possible she may have wandered there, you know, and of course there would be no one to bring her home. Anyway, papa would know what to do. You can stay with the children, Nell: you're in no condition to go out. Get them to bed if you can, and try to rest yourself. No, no; don't tell me to rest, child. I shall die if I stay here another minute doing nothing, when that poor baby—" And, despite Nell's entreaties, out in the snow and the darkness she went.

It was nearly an hour later. The children, refusing to go to bed, had fallen asleep before the fire, and Nell was sadly speculating as to whether her sister and brother-in-law were not as lost as little Alice, when there was a run up the steps, a hasty ring, which the cook answered, and there entered a tall and stalwart fellow, who, in his fur overcoat and cap, with snow thick on his long, brown beard, looked a very Santa Claus. But clinging to his shoulder, half drowned in sleep, and looking in her snow-flaked wrappings like a rose in bloom, lay baby Alice. A branch of holly thick with crimson berries trailed still from her clinched fist, and, as she opened her eyes in the unaccustomed light, she was the very spirit of Christmas, the Child come down to them once more. Nell, whose amazed recognition of Tom Gray was lost in this new wonder, could only look at her, with never a sensible word to say to either of them in that first moment.

"I found her at the railway-station," Tom said, after a breathless instant, in which he had forgotten all the usual greetings as entirely as she. "The

policeman brought her in, thinking she might belong to some one there. I knew her at once, and I knew, too, from the little she was able to tell me, that she had been lost for hours. No, no, don't wake her up if you can help it," he went on, as he gave her into Nell's arms, "she is so tired. She went straight to sleep as soon as I started with her. I hope she hasn't taken cold, but she's been wandering everywhere. If it had not been the day before Christmas, some one would have found out her case sooner; but every one is too busy to notice a crying child much now."

And when Nell had explained the case, as she warmed the little one's feet before the grate,—"I suppose, then, I'd better go straight up to your father's for Mrs. Cleve. She must be nearly distracted."

But he lingered an instant, for Nell, cuddling close to the baby and smiling down on the sleeping face, was too pretty a picture to leave unnoticed. Her cheeks were flushed, her hair all in a disordered fluff about her fair forehead, and the heavy circular, which in all this anxiety she had only half discarded, gave to her slender and girlish figure a touch of matronly grace. She was not looking at him; she was all absorbed, apparently, in Alice; but Tom Gray had only a prospective interest in that baby.

"I haven't a right to ask it now," he said hesitatingly, coming back after he had reached the door, "and I suppose it's all folly anyway, since you didn't answer, but there's just the chance of a mistake. You got my letter, Nell?"

Then at last Nell looked up at him, all her color deepening and her heart in her eyes. "I've had no letter," she said, after an instant that seemed an age to them both. "Oh, Tom, you did write, then, as you said you would?—and you do care for me—a—little?"

"And you care for me a little?" repeated Tom Gray, in rapturous echo, as between them they nearly let the baby fall. "I didn't believe you could be so cold-hearted, Nell, as not to. And I was a fool to write at this time of

year, when the mails are all so crowded; and I deserve all I've gone through in the last few days because I had no answer. For, you see, I was so stupid as to write that if I didn't hear from you I should take it as a refusal. There's nothing in the world quite so blind as that, in love or business, and it's sure to make trouble. But I knew how busy you were, and—"

"And you thought I could be so absorbed as not even to answer that question," Nell said, between laughing and crying. "But I deserve you should think anything of me, after what I did."

But here steps were heard again at the door, and the next moment Mr. and Mrs. Ashton appeared, carrying Mrs. Cleve, more dead than alive, between them. With the maternal raptures and the young people's, it was a pretty confusion for the next few minutes; and then, just as they began to quiet a little, Mr. Cleve appeared, exhausted from his round of the police-stations, and it all had to be gone over again. The children woke up and dragged out the Christmas-presents, and there seemed small prospect of any one's getting any rest that night.

"Indeed, I wish we could all stay together and hear the chimes," Mrs. Cleve cried, with effusive hospitality, when the party moved to break up. "I am so glad, so delighted at the way everything has come about! Really, baby's loss seems almost a providence."

"A providence to the young people,"

growled Mr. Cleve. "But they might have come together in a more rational way if Tom had taken any other time of year for his correspondence, or Nell been a little less occupied a month ago. For if you and the children, Maria, escape colds and fever after all this, I shall be a good deal surprised."

"Listen! listen!" Mrs. Cleve cried ecstatically, two hours later, rousing her husband from his first sound sleep. And from St. Philip's pealed softly on the midnight air the music of the chimes:

Hark, the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King.

"Oh, isn't it perfectly lovely, John? It's like angelic voices, and it makes one remember everything, you know—"

"Which they didn't have time to think of while they were getting ready for Christmas," groaned Mr. Cleve, who found it far from angelic to be so disturbed. "My dear, you'll find 'Twas on a Calm and Silent Night,' appropriately bound and illustrated, as the advertisement says, on your table, and you may read it now if you want to get yourself into a proper frame of mind. But I shall have no good will to any one if you keep me awake now."

And as Mrs. Cleve, too much of a child to wait, grasped her gift, she murmured, but, like a good wife, too low for him to hear, "And is this *all* John's going to give me? Well, then, I do hope papa has sent the cloak."

EMILY F. WHEELER.

THE SILENT BOND.

THE love that holds her in its arms she has no thought of wronging,
For any life apart from it she has no dream nor longing;
But, by a glad content possessed, she leans her heart upon its breast.

She takes with loving, grateful hand the bounties that it brings her;
She listens with calm pleasure to the praiseful songs it sings her;
She loves the tenderness profound that like a garment wraps her round.

For all this generous trust and truth, this self-absorbing passion,
She makes a full and sweet return in lavish woman-fashion;
Filled with all gracious, loyal thought, she dreams not of withholding aught.

And yet, sometimes, above the songs upon her glad ears falling,
Across the silence of the years she hears a low voice calling;
She walks beneath a vanished moon, she wears the rose of a dead June.

Just for a moment living love has lost its hold upon her;
Just for a moment perished joy from present bliss has won her;
And, all her soul in chaos whirled, she stands in a forgotten world.

Strong are the bonds of flesh, but, oh! beyond all understanding,
She owns the spirit's bold behest, the masterful commanding,
That bids her seek through time and space her soul's deserted trysting-place.

CARLOTTA PERRY.

THE PREMIER OF CANADA.

FOR forty years a representative of the people in Parliament, for thirty the trusted and well-beloved leader of the great Conservative party, and for twenty-five the Premier of the Dominion of Canada, the career of Sir John A. Macdonald is in one respect at least unique in the history of parliamentary institutions. With the year 1884 Sir John completes his fourth decade of continuous public life, and although, according to every appearance, there are many years of active service yet before him, the time seems peculiarly appropriate for briefly reviewing what those years have brought forth, and giving some account of the most astute, brilliant, and successful statesman that has ever held sway in Canada.

Like so many others who have contributed to the development and prosperity of Canada, Sir John is a Scotchman, having first seen the light at Glasgow in the year 1815. Five years later, as a bright-eyed, curly-haired, active boy, he helped to form a family-group seeking a home in the New World to redress the balance of the Old. His

father decided upon Kingston, in what is now the province of Ontario, for his permanent abiding-place, and there, by the exercise of unremitting diligence and characteristic thrift, prospered so well that he was enabled to gratify his paternal pride by giving his most promising son as thorough an education as could be obtained in those days, when schools were scarce and colleges almost unknown. While at school the future statesman seems to have proved a very satisfactory pupil, being often called upon by the master to display to admiring visitors his proficiency in mathematics and penmanship. He is described by one who served under the same teacher as having "a very intelligent and pleasing face, strange, fuzzy-looking hair that curled in a dark mass, and a striking nose," all of which physical traits, and particularly the last, he has preserved in a marked degree to the present day, as the cartoons of "Grip," the Canadian Punch, abundantly testify.

His school-days over, at the age of sixteen he secured a stool in the chambers of a leading barrister, and spent

five years in studying the principles of his chosen profession, paying such careful heed thereto that the lawyer with whom he was articled often spoke of him as the most diligent student he had ever seen. Once embarked in business on his own account, he soon acquired an excellent practice. Unfailingly skillful, courteous and attentive, his reputation rapidly grew, and the highest prizes of the profession lay within the natural scope of his ambition. But destiny had selected him for a more exalted station than even the chair of a chief justice. In those comparatively primitive days the possession of any decided measure of talent, combined with a good education, was sufficient to mark a man out for public life and insure opportunities for attaining political distinction. Mr. Macdonald had not been many years in practice before his brilliant defence of one Von Shoultz attracted general attention and prepared the way for his entrance into political life. Von Shoultz was a Pole, whose sympathy with the rebellion of 1838 under Mackenzie led him to take up ineffectual arms in a pathetically inadequate attempt to free Canada from what he imagined to be a tyrannical king to that under which his own beloved land had been crushed. When court-martialled for his crime, public feeling ran so high against him that he was practically a condemned man before his trial, and it required no slight degree of moral courage to undertake his defence. Yet Mr. Macdonald not only gallantly appeared as his advocate, but displayed on behalf of the unfortunate prisoner such keen professional skill, unselfish zeal, and moving eloquence that, despite the unpopularity of his cause, he placed himself at one bound in the foremost rank of his profession. There was more truth in the prophecy than perhaps the writer himself imagined who, reporting the proceedings for one of the journals of the day, ventured to predict that "Von Shoultz's counsel would soon be recognized as one of the first men in the country."

From that day the feeling grew and

gathered force that this talented young lawyer must be sent to Parliament, and accordingly, in 1844, he was offered the nomination for Kingston in the Conservative interest. His triumphant election was the result of an exciting contest, in the course of which he gave unmistakable promise of very unusual ability as a debater, and especially of what has been called "his wonderful way of casting oil upon the troubled waters," a happy faculty which enabled him often to secure a hearing when other men would have been shouted into silence by the whiskey-inflamed men who formed his audience.

In December, 1844, the Canadian Parliament assembled for the despatch of business, and Mr. Macdonald, who supported the party then in power, began his long executive career on the 12th of that month, being appointed a member of the Standing Orders Committee. Although he could hardly help realizing his marked superiority in intellect and attainments to the majority of his fellow-members, Mr. Macdonald did not plunge into debate with premature impetuosity, as young members of promise are apt to do. Thoroughly appreciating the force of the adage, "*Festina lente*," he allowed his voice to be but seldom heard during his first two sessions. Twice, however, he dared to cross swords with no less formidable an opponent than the leader of the opposition, Mr. Baldwin, the most powerful debater in that House. On both these occasions the question under debate happened to be of a constitutional character, and Mr. Macdonald had already by diligent study laid broad and deep the foundations of that mastery of constitutional law for which he is unrivalled in Canada to-day. Modestly as he bore himself, however, his merit went not unperceived, and in 1847 a request came from the then Premier, Mr. Draper, that he should accept the portfolio of Receiver-General. After a short continuance in this office, he exchanged it for the Crown Lands, a department which had then almost as bad a reputation for vexatious delay and masterly

muddling as the English Court of Chancery in the Jarndyce days, but in which he instituted reforms of great and lasting benefit. A year later Parliament dissolved, and, although in the general election which followed Mr. Macdonald easily retained his own seat, so many of his party lost theirs that when Parliament reassembled the Conservatives found themselves in a hopeless minority.

Thenceforward, during six years of stirring events which must be passed over in silence, Mr. Macdonald's abilities were confined within the limited sphere available to even the most talented member of an opposition which could count only nineteen supporters in a House of eighty-four representatives. They were years of precious experience to him, however. Numerically weak as the opposition was, he made it a power to be respected by the occupants of the Treasury Benches, and never permitted any important measure to pass, of whose principles he disapproved, without raising his voice in determined protest. Thus were his powers of debate surely and solidly strengthened, his rare penetration into men and motives developed, and he himself prepared for that long hold upon the reins of power which, beginning in 1854, continues still with undiminished vigor, having in all those thirty years had but two *lacunæ*,—namely, the Liberal administrations of 1862–64 and 1874–78.

The year 1854 was one of intense political excitement in Canada. The Reform ministry of Mr. Hincks had resigned, and three distinct parties now presented themselves before the people, asking their suffrages,—the Government party, led by Mr. Hincks, the "Grits," as they were nicknamed, under the despotic rule of Mr. Brown, and the Conservatives, owning allegiance to Sir Allan Macnab. Mr. Macdonald belonged to the last, and was its real, although not nominal, leader, Sir Allan being still of service as a figure-head. The elections decided nothing, for each party came out with a fair following. When the House met, it was evident that, unless some coalition could

be formed, public business was at a dead-lock, as neither of the three parties could construct a stable government alone. Anxious, exciting days of conference, caucus, and combination followed, with the final result that by a coalition of the more staid and solid Liberals with the liberalized and progressive Conservatives, a government was formed with sufficient support to insure its effective existence. Mr. Morin and Sir Allan Macnab were at first the joint Premiers of the new administration, but soon after its formation the former retired in favor of Colonel Taché, and the latter, who had pretty well outlived his usefulness, was by the unanimous wish of the party replaced by Mr. Macdonald. A year later, Colonel Taché, finding the labors of leadership too onerous, made way for Mr. Cartier, one of the ablest statesmen the old province of Quebec has ever produced, and between whom and Mr. Macdonald there thenceforth existed an intimate and cordial political partnership. Mr. Macdonald now became Premier in name as well as in fact, the government bearing the title of Macdonald-Cartier, according to the fashion in those days of endowing governments with double-barrelled titles, in order to indicate the leaders of the Upper and Lower Canada sections respectively.

Three great and critical questions, upon the satisfactory settlement of which it may safely be said the whole future of Canada as a nation depended, had for some time been clamoring for decisive action from successive administrations. These were the choice of a permanent capital, representation by population, and government by double majority. Our present concern is with the first only, as the other two will be encountered again farther on.

Ever since the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada had been united in constitutional wedlock, the country had been without a fixed capital, simply because no government had the courage to decide which of four jealous rivals for the honor should be preferred. Toronto and Kingston in Upper Canada,

and Montreal and Quebec in the Lower province, all vigorously asserted their claims,—Toronto as having the most intelligence and culture, Kingston as the strongest strategically, Montreal as the most convenient, and Quebec as the richest in historical associations. The dilemma proved a very difficult one, and many were the shifts resorted to by the legislature to effect an amicable solution. In 1841 Kingston was made the capital, but soon gave deep dissatisfaction, and in 1844 Montreal obtained the privilege, only to forfeit it again in 1849, when the passage of an obnoxious bill so infuriated the Tory mob that they pelted Lord Elgin with paving-stones, smashed his carriage in the street, and finally wound up by burning the Parliament Buildings to ashes. This little ebullition the sapient law-makers very properly construed as a pointed notice to quit, and forthwith shook the Montreal dust off their feet for evermore. It was then arranged that Toronto and Quebec should be the capital alternately, each for four years at a time; but, this peripatetic system being found neither pleasant nor profitable, Mr. Macdonald suggested to his colleagues that the best way out of the difficulty would be to have the whole matter referred to the Queen for her arbitrament. This was accordingly done, much against the grain of the opposition, and in 1858 her Majesty, to the surprise of all and the consternation of many, adopted a course similar to that often pursued at Presidential conventions where there happen to be so many candidates possessing apparently equal claims and chances that it is impossible to decide between them, and some "dark horse" is consequently chosen by way of compromise. Putting aside all the jealous aspirants, her Majesty decided that a quiet little country town in the province of Ontario, having no other pretensions than the extraordinary beauty of its site and the magnificence of its water-power, should be the capital of Canada.

Mr. Brown, who then led the opposition, although an Ontario member, was especially loud and persistent in his pro-

tests against the royal choice, and when the session of 1858 opened he thought that in this question he held the lever which would lift the government out of its place. Accordingly, among the amendments moved to the address was one disapproving of Ottawa as the capital. This amendment having been carried by a vote of sixty-four to fifty, Mr. Brown believed that his time had come, and immediately upon the result of the vote being declared sprang up and announced that, to test the sense of the House, he would move an adjournment. Mr. Macdonald with calm irony accepted the challenge, quietly saying, "Let the vote on the adjournment test the question whether or not the ministry possesses the confidence of this House." The vote was taken amidst much excitement, every one realizing that the fate of the ministry depended upon its issue. The result showed sixty-one for the government and fifty against it. The ministry, despite the previous adverse vote, were therefore absolved from the constitutional necessity for resigning.

Notwithstanding this, the Premier counselled resignation. With that profound penetration which renders him almost prophetic in the accuracy of his forecasts, he now desisted an opportunity of dealing his relentless opponent, Mr. Brown, a blow from which he would be long in recovering. Eminent as were the latter's abilities, his character had many grave defects, and among them a passionate impatience. A man of tireless energy, he knew well how to labor, but had never learned how to wait. The astute Premier laid his plans accordingly. He was confident that he still commanded a majority in the House, and that no government formed by his opponent could be permanent. He also knew that so surely as he resigned Mr. Brown would jump at the chance of getting into power, without waiting to count the cost. So, the day after the hostile vote, the Macdonald-Cartier administration resigned, and Mr. Brown, being sent for by the Governor, undertook the task of form-

ing a government with an alacrity which clearly showed that his burning desire for power had blinded his eyes to the actual condition of affairs, as he did not even stipulate for an appeal to the country. Three days later the new ministry was announced, and proposed to proceed with the public business; but the House had no sooner assembled than a want-of-confidence vote was moved by a leading Conservative, and, after an exciting and acrimonious discussion, the callow ministry found themselves in a minority of forty. Under these circumstances they could do nothing but resign, which they accordingly did forthwith, after having been in office hardly forty-eight hours. His strategy thus crowned with complete success, Mr. Macdonald returned to power, supported by an even larger majority than before, and having around his council-board almost precisely the same faces as previous to his resignation.

His opponents being utterly demoralized, Mr. Macdonald felt justified in adding two very significant items to the ministerial programme. In view of the unsatisfactory state of the revenue, certain amendments to the tariff were proposed, wherein we may discern the germs of that protective system which thenceforth steadily developed until, under the title of "National Policy," it furnished the battle-cry wherewith Sir John in 1878 led his forces to victory, and which to-day constitutes the fiscal policy of the Dominion. A far more important announcement, however, was that the expediency of a Federation of all the British North American provinces would be anxiously considered, and communication presently entered into with the home government and the maritime provinces upon the subject. As confederation unquestionably forms the greatest event in the history of Canada, to tell the story of its cause, conception, and completion with any fulness would require an article by itself; and yet it is impossible to present any clear outline of Sir John Macdonald's career without detailing his

intimate connection with this grand constitutional achievement. The tale must therefore be told, but as briefly as is consistent with its importance.

Reference has been already made to the question of representation by population as one upon the harmonious settlement of which the future of Canada depended. Its vital significance arose from the wide differences of race and religion which unhappily existed between the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, or Ontario and Quebec, as they are now called. Upper Canada was inhabited almost exclusively by an English-speaking, Protestant population, while in Lower Canada the people were swayed by the ties that connected them with France and with his Holiness at Rome. When the two Canadas united in 1841, although the Lower province had then the larger population, it was stipulated that both provinces should send an equal number of representatives to the joint Parliament, and with this arrangement Upper Canada was for the time well content. But, as years passed by, the English province outstripped in wealth and population her slower sister, and began to think that the representation should be changed so as to bear a just proportion to the respective population, and the Liberals of that day, seeking for an effective party cry, seized upon representation by population and made it their shibboleth. As year by year Ontario increased her lead over Quebec, the movement gained power and popularity within her borders, while of course there could be no hope of its meeting with aught save the most determined opposition in Quebec.

The rejection of the Double Majority principle by Mr. Macdonald's government, on account of its utter impracticability, served only to intensify the demand for representation by population, and, linked ominously with it, the cry of "French domination" made itself heard throughout Ontario. It was a very critical juncture, and only the sagest statesmanship could avert the coming peril. Any attempt to alter the representation in favor of Ontario would be

simply to ring the death-knell of the union, while persistence in denying Ontario what she with so much justice claimed must prove equally disastrous.

In this emergency the scheme for a confederation of all the provinces presented itself to Mr. Macdonald's mind as a possible solution of the difficulty. First mooted by the British-American League in 1849, it had made but little impression, and perhaps might have never been heard of again but for the circumstances just indicated. Having been formally adopted by the Conservatives as a principal plank in the party platform, the great scheme now fully entered the arena of practical politics, and thenceforward until its execution formed a subject of engrossing interest.

Meanwhile, however, the people now seemed to grow weary of the Macdonald régime, and during the session of 1862 its supporters fell away one by one until finally the ministry were defeated on a militia bill introduced by Mr. Macdonald and rendered necessary in his opinion by the possibility of serious complications with the neighboring republic, then in the throes of civil war. A Liberal administration then took the country under its care, but, after a troubled existence, resigned in 1864. Public affairs now fell into a very curious and alarming condition. Although Mr. Macdonald, with the aid of his old ally, Colonel Taché, succeeded in forming an harmoniously-constructed and thoroughly representative government, containing the very ablest men of his party, Parliament had no sooner met than it became clear that they were insecure in their tenancy of office. A want-of-confidence motion brought forward at an early stage of the session escaped defeat by the narrow majority of two, and a few days later the sudden defection of two followers on a similar motion changed the ministerial majority into a minority of just the same dimensions. Matters were indeed at a strange pass. Four administrations had fallen within a little more than two years. All public business beyond mere routine was at a stand-still. There could be but one way out of this

critical *cul-de-sac*,—to wit, coalition; and this, in view of the bitter antagonism between the two parties, seemed so impracticable as to be hardly worth discussing. But then, according to the proverb, it is the impossible which happens; and so it fell out in this case. To the profound surprise of supporters and opponents alike, but to his own infinite credit, Mr. Brown, who still led the opposition, realizing the need of decisive action if the union was to be preserved, made overtures to Mr. Macdonald, which ultimately resulted in the former consenting to enter the cabinet, with two of his followers, on the express understanding that as a substitute for representation by population, for which he had so consistently fought, Parliament would at its next session introduce the federal principle into Canada. On this arrangement being perfected the dead-lock came to an end; the Conservative lion and the Grit tiger took sweet counsel together, and through their united action, supplemented by the eloquent advocacy and exhaustless ardor of Mr. Cartier in Quebec, Mr. Tupper in Nova Scotia, and Mr. Tilley in New Brunswick, confederation was in the year 1867 given to Canada. Throughout all the difficult and intricate negotiations that were required to perfect the scheme, although the ablest public men in Canada co-operated, Mr. Macdonald was *facile princeps*. Unanimously chosen chairman of the final conference, held in London in December, 1865, to which came delegates from all the provinces, his perfect knowledge of all details, marvellous tact, and irresistible persuasive powers proved equal to the herculean task of reconciling the vast and varied interests which at times seemed so seriously conflicting as to menace the whole scheme. Confederation may indeed be justly regarded as Sir John Macdonald's *magnum opus*.

It was but right and fitting, therefore, that to him should be committed the task of forming the first administration under the new order of things. In fulfilling this commission Mr. Macdonald wisely determined to bring together, irrespective of all party considerations,

* Sir
ligence
Sir Jo
been p
Cross
cillor,
a Knig
Isabel

those gentlemen who represented majorities in the provinces to which they belonged. "I do not want it to be felt," said he, "by any section in the country that they have no representative in the cabinet and no influence in the government." A ministry selected on these principles and containing the best material in the new Dominion could not fail to prove exceedingly strong, and that this one should have a long and successful career was therefore only a natural consequence. Lord Monck, who as Governor of the Canadas had been a cordial co-operator in promoting the confederation, was appointed Governor-General of the new Dominion, and one of his first official acts was, by her Majesty's direction, to confer upon Mr. Macdonald the well-merited honor of Knight Commander of the Bath.*

Confederation necessarily wiped out all those issues which had in the past formed subjects of contention in the Canadian Parliament, and the new government enjoyed the singular good fortune of beginning their career with a clean slate and a massive majority. The seven years of their rule were like the seven good years in Egypt when Joseph was prime minister, and peace, prosperity, and progress reigned throughout the land. The Dominion, moreover, extended its boundaries beyond the four provinces of which it was originally composed. Prince Edward Island, which had at first hung back from confederation, recognized its advantages and became a partner to the alliance. The great *terra incognita* of the Northwest Territories, toward which Sir John had cast longing eyes ever since 1857, when at his suggestion Chief-Justice Draper went to England to treat with the Hudson's Bay Company for their acquisition, were, after considerable opposition from the half-breed population, transferred to the Dominion, and thus

another province, rejoicing in the mellifluous name of Manitoba, was merged in this growing legislative union.

One of the most important events of this period, however, and one with which Sir John's name will ever be peculiarly associated, was the Washington convention of 1871, in which a number of irritating international questions that had accumulated between Great Britain and the United States received a quietus through the medium of a joint commission. The principal subjects that came before this commission were the fishery question, the Alabama claims, the navigation of the St. Lawrence, and the boundary-line between the United States and British Columbia. Of these matters in issue the first was vitally important to Canada, as the dispute had during late years assumed a very serious aspect. The trouble arose in this way. The persistent refusal of the Washington authorities to entertain any proposition for a renewal of reciprocity had driven the Dominion government to retaliate by denying to American fishermen the use of Canadian waters, and this prohibition had been enforced by the fitting out of a miniature navy for seizing and confiscating all trespassing vessels. Serious complications soon occurred, and worse threatened in the near future. The announcement, therefore, that the imperial and American governments had consented to refer this along with the other matters in dispute between them to the arbitrament of common sense and enlightened justice instead of the breech-loader and the bayonet was hailed with general satisfaction.

Not in any sense as a representative of Canada, since Canada, being a colony, could of course have no status in such a proceeding, but as a representative of England, selected for that honor because intimately acquainted with all the subjects awaiting settlement and bound to consider imperial interests as altogether paramount to colonial, Sir John occupied a place on that commission. A more delicate or difficult position can hardly be conceived. He has thus described it for us himself: "I had con-

* Since this article was put in type, the intelligence has been received from England, where Sir John at present is, that her Majesty has been pleased to confer upon him the Grand Cross of the Bath. He is also a Privy Councillor, with the title of Right Honorable, and a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Order of Isabel la Católica of Spain.

tinually before me not only the imperial question, but the interests of the Dominion of Canada, which I was there especially to represent, and the difficulty of my position was, that if I gave undue prominence to the interests of Canada I might justly be held in England to be taking a purely colonial and selfish view, regardless of the interests of the empire as a whole and the interests of Canada as a portion of the empire; and, on the other hand, if I kept my eyes solely on imperial considerations I might be held as neglecting my special duty toward my own country.* Sir John was, in fact, to use a homely phrase, between the devil and the deep sea; and no doubt it would have been far better for his peace of mind had he never consented to act,—for, being but coldly supported by his English coadjutors, he found it impossible to secure for Canada as full consideration as he felt to be her real due. The results of the convention are well known. The Alabama claims were referred to another arbitration board for settlement, the San Juan boundary dispute went to the Emperor of Germany for his adjudication, while free navigation of the St. Lawrence and Michigan Canals was guaranteed to American and Canadian citizens alike. With regard to the fishery question it was settled that the Canadian waters should be thrown open to American fishermen for a period of ten years, and that the United States should pay for this privilege such amount as might be awarded by a special commission to meet at a later day.*

Although Sir John at the Washington convention exerted himself to do all for Canada that was consistent with his honor and duty as an imperial representative, as is abundantly proved by the simple fact that his titled colleagues from Great Britain found grave fault with him for what they deemed his over-zealous colonialism, yet his political opponents professed to believe that

a wanton sacrifice of Canadian interests had been deliberately committed. No sooner were the results announced than there burst upon him from the opposition press a tornado of vituperation and calumny unsurpassed for violence in the annals of Canadian party journalism. The cruelest insinuations as to his motives found free currency, and he was spared no pang that tongue or pen could inflict. But throughout the storm the Premier bore himself with the steadfast, silent fortitude of a man who carried within him the cheering consciousness of having done the utmost that he could, be the issue what it might. At length, when that portion of the treaty which required ratification from Canada came before Parliament, his silence was broken, and in a splendid speech, lasting over many hours, a veritable masterpiece of constitutional learning, incisive logic, broad statesmanship, and earnest eloquence, in many respects the finest effort of his life, Sir John so utterly routed his assailants from every position they had taken that the decisive vote of one hundred and twenty-one to fifty-five testified how completely he had justified himself before the country. Time has brought him its revenges, too; for at the very last session of Parliament his opponents, conveniently oblivious of their past record, lavished high praise upon those very clauses in the treaty for consenting to which they had once denounced him as a traitor, but for the renewal of which they now expressed themselves profoundly anxious.

With the year 1872 the first Parliament of the Dominion of Canada completed its allotted term, and was accordingly dissolved. The general election which followed proved somewhat of a surprise to the Conservatives, as, although the ministry still retained a good working majority, its former proportions were significantly reduced, especially in the pivotal province of Ontario, and there were unmistakable signs on all sides of that craving for change which inevitably permeates the public mind when one administration has held a long monopoly of

* This commission met at Halifax, Nova Scotia, in the year 1877, and awarded to Canada five and a half million dollars, which sum was duly paid over by the United States.

office. Other causes were at work also, and principally the apprehension with which many people regarded the gigantic scheme of a trans-continental railway, whose construction within ten years had been the chief argument wherewith British Columbia had been induced to enter the union a short time previously. The opposition proved conclusively enough that the carrying out of so stupendous an undertaking within the time appointed was simply impossible, and the spectre of national bankruptcy was successfully evoked to frighten the timid supporters of the government from their allegiance and give an impulse to the wavering in their leanings toward desertion. The crisis came sooner than even the most sanguine members of the opposition could have hoped. During the session of 1873 the relations of the government toward the Canadian Pacific Railway matter were made the base of a tremendous and unsparing attack all along the line. When the fight began, Sir John, trusting in the fidelity of his followers, went into it with cheerful courage and little doubt as to the ultimate result, but as each day witnessed fresh defections from his ranks,—defections which an eloquent appeal, displaying marvellous fertility of resource and all his peculiar persuasive powers in their very highest degree, failed to check,—he decided to resign without waiting for the final test, and accordingly, on the 5th of November, 1873, he placed his resignation in the hands of the Governor-General. Thus, after an unbroken reign of ten long and fruitful years, we see him once more consigned to the cold shades of opposition, while a Liberal administration, under the cautious, canny guidance of Mr. Mackenzie, became the guardian of the common weal.

During the four years which followed Sir John possessed his soul in patience, offering no factious opposition to the government, but, on the contrary, cordially co-operating with them in perfecting any measure that was manifestly for the public good. Careful and prudent as was the Mackenzie rule, however, the country failed to prosper under it. Year

by year the commercial situation grew worse, the revenue deficits graver, and the future prospects darker. The ministry confessed themselves quite unable to mend matters, being, as their finance minister put it, "mere flies on the wheel." In this woful condition of affairs Sir John's keen eyes discerned the opening up of a route which would lead him back to power. Accordingly, in 1876 he came forward with a scheme for the financial rehabilitation of the country, which, under the title of the "National Policy," was immediately adopted by his party, and the new protective gospel was so zealously preached that when in 1878 the two parties met once more at the polls the Conservatives swept the country from Nova Scotia to British Columbia, and Mr. Mackenzie resigned without waiting for the assembling of Parliament.

Thus the year 1878 beheld Sir John restored to power, with a stronger following and a fairer future than at any time in his whole career; and from then until now he has guided the affairs of state with such consummate skill and unvarying success that his hold upon the people's hearts seems more firmly fixed to-day than when six years ago they replaced him in the Premier's chair with triumphant rejoicings. The events of these later years are still too recent and too much within the heated atmosphere of party politics to be dwelt upon. The National Policy has been perfected, the vast Canadian Pacific Railway carried within a year of completion, the great Northwest peopled with permanent settlers, the deficits exchanged for substantial surpluses, and the whole country from ocean to ocean has prospered and progressed in a degree that would be unexampled but for the record of her mighty neighbor below the forty-ninth parallel.

Such is a brief and all too imperfect outline of Sir John Macdonald's public career. It still remains for us to present some picture of the man himself ere reaching our conclusion.

"Who is he?" inquired the renowned special G. A. Sala, as he watched Sir

John Macdonald at a public ball in Quebec in 1864 passing and repassing with that easy alertness which still distinguishes his movements. "How like Disraeli! and with a strong dash of Milner Gibson, too. Remarkable man, I should think. One would inquire his name anywhere." This remark of Sala's aptly and accurately phrases the impression Sir John creates upon the observer to-day. Tall and lithe in figure, slightly stooped, as becomes a life-long student, with rich, waving locks of fast-silvering hair, smooth-shaven face, corrugated like a glacier-scarred rock by a net-work of seams and wrinkles, wherein the most opposite emotions play hide-and-seek with one another according to the mood of the moment, bright bird-like eyes, observant of everything around, and a quick, gliding step, whose jaunty grace the fast-growing burden of years has not yet impaired,—such are the Premier's most striking physical characteristics. As one watches him through the weary months of a parliamentary session, scarcely ever absent from his post at the Speaker's right, always alert, active, and prepared for whatever may turn up, charming to his supporters and courteous to his opponents, speaking often, yet never unnecessarily or at too great length, guiding and controlling the legislative machine with the same masterful ease as the captain of an ocean-steamer rules his marine microcosm, you cease to wonder that interest should develop into admiration, and admiration into adoration, as it has done with so many of his followers. He is not, perhaps, the greatest orator in the House, but he is unquestionably the greatest debater. When in good form he is a delightful speaker, and the prospect of a speech from him crowds the galleries to suffocation. When beginning to speak, his voice is frequently low, indistinct, and hesitating, the words come slowly and are apt to be repeated, but as his subject warms upon him all this disappears, he is soon well under way, and proceeds from point to point with rapidity, clearness, and most satisfying felicity of expression. He is never still

for a moment while on his feet: now he has his back to the Speaker, and now looks him full in the face; this moment he hangs his eye-glasses jauntily astride his generously-proportioned nose, the next he shakes them menacingly toward the gentlemen on the other side of the House. Lowering his voice to a thrilling whisper or raising it to a triumphant shout, ever and anon convulsing his listeners by some deliciously absurd joke or keenly effective allusion, the Premier, after forty years of active service, shows himself as vigorous, as witty, as pugnacious, and as vivacious as at any time in the past. He captivates, even though he may not convince, and rarely fails to carry his point, however weak may be his side of the argument.

The peculiar feature which distinguishes him as a political leader is the amazing dexterity wherewith he manages to hold together a set of heterogeneous elements—national, religious, sectional, personal—actuated each of them, be it confessed, more by regard to their own individual interests than to the welfare of the united people. Both as regards the instability of the medium which supports him and the wondrous skill with which it is made to seem as reliable as the solid ground, Sir John may not inaptly be compared to the circus athlete in his "grand challenge-act of riding six fiery steeds simultaneously." Between not merely two, but half a dozen, slippery stools the Premier is of course liable at any time to fall to the ground; yet, by means of that personal magnetism which he possesses in so rare a degree, and whereby he scores so many successes in placating disaffected followers or alluring recruits from the hostile camp, he maintains himself impreguably intrenched in power. As an instance of his almost mystic influence over his fellow-men, the following incident is to the point. The Premier of the province of Ontario, Mr. Sanfield Macdonald, happened to be greatly incensed against Sir John for some cause or other, at a time when his co-operation in a certain scheme was indispensably necessary, and he made no attempt to

conceal his hostility. Sir John nevertheless did not despair of securing his aid, and arranged for an interview. When the two Premiers first met there was reason to fear a violent rupture, so intense seemed Mr. Macdonald's feelings. They proceeded separately to a private room, while their friends awaited the result with the liveliest anxiety. In less than an hour the interview was over, and the Ontario Premier announced his intention of proceeding forthwith upon the mission for which Sir John had sought his services.

Both in public and in private Sir John shows himself a master of wit and satire. It is, however, of that genuinely impromptu unstudied kind which, depending as it does for its brilliancy to a large extent upon the attendant circumstances and the manner accompanying the utterance, renders illustration very difficult. On last New-Year's day it devolved upon Sir John to present his colleagues in the cabinet to the new Governor-General when they made their customary formal call. As it happened to be a very cold day, the Secretary of State appeared in a superb seal-skin coat draping him to the knees, and was accordingly introduced to his Excellency in this unexpected but appropriate manner: "My lord, this is the great seal." Again, during the course of a rather warm debate last session, Sir John referred to the great victory he had won in 1882, whereupon a leading member of the opposition called out, "Why do you not try it over again?" alluding to rumors then prevalent of a dissolution being imminent. Quick as lightning came the discomfiting retort, "Because I do not want to lose the presence of my honorable friend."

We have already seen that Mr. Sala on first encountering Sir John was much impressed by his resemblance to the late Earl of Beaconsfield. The physical likeness was no doubt very striking, and ingenious minds have amused themselves by tracing out a fur-

ther similarity in intellect, manner, and career. However this may be, there is at all events one point of parallelism between the two Premiers which is very patent, and that is the extreme good fortune which attended their choice of a help-mate. All that the Countess of Beaconsfield was to the Conservative Premier of England has Lady Macdonald been to the Conservative Premier of Canada. Endowed with abundant energy, surpassing tact, and intense devotion to her husband's interests, thoroughly informed as to all the questions of the day, courteous, hospitable, considerate, Lady Macdonald is the central figure in the social life of the capital, and no unimportant factor in its political life also.

In dealing simply with what has been, we have reached the proper limits of our task, and we shall leave it to the critics to lay down what should have been, and to the prophets to foreshadow what will be. Whether Sir John will remain fixed in power until his days of active work are ended, or whether the demons of change and chance will conspire once more to relegate him to the comparative obscurity of opposition, who shall predict? Be the future what it may, however, this much may be safely ventured, that when the time does come for Sir John, in the famous words of Burke, "to shut the book," then, and only then, will the people of Canada fully realize the deep, earnest truth that underlay those passionate, pathetic words with which he closed his great speech in the Pacific Railway debate of 1873: "I can see past the decision of this House, either for or against me. I know—and it is no vain boast for me to say so, for even my enemies will admit that I am no boaster—that there does not exist in Canada a man who has given more of his time, more of his heart, more of his wealth, or more of his intellect and powers, such as they may be, for the good of this Dominion of Canada."

JAMES MACDONALD OXLEY.

AURORA.

CHAPTER XVI.

A SIGNAL.

D'RUBIERA did not believe a word that his wife had said and insinuated about Aurora. He was accustomed to hear such stories and insinuations from her. He had heard so many that insensibly his own mind had taken a tinge from them. A man's mind always does color itself more or less from the woman to whose talk he listens even doubtingly. He had less confidence in people, was less given to enthusiastic admiration, to admiration of any sort. He saw that there was sometimes foundation for the duchess's evil talk. People who always speak evil do sometimes speak the truth; and there is no one of whom evil may not be said, and proved to the satisfaction of one wishing to believe. The Son of God was accused of being a wine-bibber and a friend of publicans and sinners, and the circumstantial evidence against him was very strong. He did drink wine, he even changed water to wine on one occasion, and some of his associates were very vulgar, not to say disreputable, people. They were not rich and powerful enough to hide their sins. Doubtless many very nice people thought ill of our Blessed Lord on account of these indisputable facts, being so dizzy with their small orbit that they could not catch the movement of that circle which takes in the three worlds.

Seeing, therefore, that his wife often proved, or seemed to prove, that there was a stain on what to him had been immaculate, D'Rubiera had gradually imbibed something of that vicious philosophy which declares that there is no such thing as essentially good people and bad people, circumstances deciding the character, and that the sheep and goats of the divine parable become sheep and goats in the twinkling of an eye.

But to his mind Aurora had always floated far above this lower region where-

in madama carried on her smirching of virtue and whitewashing of vice. She seemed to him like that other Aurora of Guido, who floats in light above the waking globe, dropping flowers from her rosy fingers. She scattered what was holier and more precious far than flowers: courage and inspiration to all noble faith and effort were the largess of her hands.

He had always held her so aloft, and he still so held her. His wife's slanders made him angry, but they did not stir a doubt. Anxious and irritated, he studied what he could do to put an end to such talk. He went about with a grave face all the morning after their conversation, and avoided the duchess and her cousin till he was obliged to meet them at breakfast. At table he said very little, and behaved with great ceremony and coldness; and when they rose, instead of smoking a cigar or drowsing over a newspaper, he wandered about the garden, and finally went toward the rocks, with the intention of going into the town.

"There he goes," the duchess whispered to her cousin. "He is on the watch. Now do as I told you."

He was not on the watch, and had not dreamed of watching. Too much annoyed to remain quiet, he was going to the piazza to ask for the mail himself. A post came in about noon. He seldom went out at this hour, for it was a sultry July noon; but anything was better than staying in the house.

He went loiteringly, his hat in his hand, when he reached the shade cast by the trees growing on the brow of the hill west and south of the rocks. He stopped now and then, knitting his brows. He must get rid of the count as soon as possible; yet he shrank from seeming inhospitable. If the fellow were not annoying, he might stay in the house a year, if he wished. The duke would have liked the house to be full of

visitors and to see a score of people about his table. But Fantini was getting his name mixed up with Aurora's, and he must go, though he were ten times the cousin of his hostess.

As he paused on one of the upper steps of the rocks, he heard some one in the garden below, which he had left deserted, and looked down involuntarily. Through the branches of intervening trees the Count Clemente was visible. He stood under a tree from which the castle could be seen, and was looking up to it, his hand shading his eyes.

"Confound the fellow! What is he looking at?" muttered the duke, himself glancing at the castle.

There was nothing to see but its dark, rough walls standing out against a sky palpitating with light.

He went on up the wide stair, which divided near the top, one step leading toward the nearest way to the piazza. As he reached the turn he glanced at the castle again, and, doing so, stopped with a start. Some one was waving a handkerchief out of the window over the balcony. He watched till the fluttering signal was withdrawn,—for a signal it unmistakably was,—then looked back to the villa garden. An answering signal waved from under the tree where he had seen Count Fantini.

An oath broke from D'Rubiera's lips: "He has got some servant-girl up there, and he doesn't care what people see or say. He knows it would reflect on Aurora's house, and he doesn't care,—curse him! She knows nothing about it. She has nothing to do with it."

Yet even in protesting her ignorance a terrible fear entered his mind and sent the blood up crimsoning his face. He looked back at the castle, scrutinizing it closely. The window of Aurora's chamber, that room which he knew so well, had been open when first he looked. It was now closed. He could not prevent the question which swiftly entered his mind,—was it closed to denote that the signal in the garden had been seen?

D'Rubiera seated himself under a tree that grew by the stair, and wiped from his face a perspiration which was not all

caused by the heat. He felt cold, indeed, for a moment, and a sense of faintness came over him. "She has nothing to do with it," he muttered; yet, as he spoke, the world whirled about dizzily.

A step came up the rocks as he sat there waiting, and presently Count Fantini appeared and stopped abruptly face to face with him, betraying an embarrassment which was not assumed. That the duke might watch he believed, but he was not prepared to encounter him in his path, and with such a threatening face, too. He was not accustomed to such open warfare.

The duke's face was threatening, but his manner was elaborately courteous: "Ah, Fantini! You, too, are out at high noon?"

"I—I am going to the piazza with a letter," the count replied, wishing that his cousin Laura had been at the depths of the sea before he had allowed her to entangle him in such a mesh.

"Then perhaps you will be so good as to ask for my letters," the duke said. "I told Michele that I should go myself; but I have changed my mind."

The count bowed. "You shall be served," he said, and was about passing on, when D'Rubiera stopped him by crossing his feet in the narrow path.

"I hope I am not too indiscreet," he said, "but am I permitted to ask to whom you were waving your handkerchief in the garden below? I happened to see you."

As the count's anger rose, his embarrassment subsided. What! was he to be watched and interrogated, like a servant or a child?

"Did I wave it?" he asked, with an assumption of languid surprise. "I was not aware. Perhaps I was brushing away the flies."

The duke stared. So! he defies me. He tells me that it is none of my business. He puts on his languid airs for me. Shall I kick him down the rocks? or shall I slap him in the face? He assumes that I have no right to ask what he does on my ground and in the affairs of a lady who was recommended to my respect.

"Perhaps the person at the castle was brushing away the flies," he said, controlling himself. "I saw a handkerchief waving from the window there. Perhaps you can tell me who happened to have the same thought as yourself. It was a somewhat—excuse me—compromising coincidence."

Rage was gnawing at the Count Fantini's heart. He cast his eyes down to hide the green sparks which he knew must be rising in them.

"I have not an idea who it could have been," he replied, in measured tones, seeming to be choosing his words carefully. "I should be exceedingly sorry if the coincidence were to compromise any one. At this hour one does not expect to be much observed. Perhaps some servant has been dusting the rooms."

"At this hour one does not make visits," retorted the duke rather quickly. He was stung to the heart to see that Fantini seemed to be carefully shielding some one whom he would not name; and the fact that he readily suggested a servant seemed to prove that it was not a servant.

"Of course not," assented the count, with great suavity.

"You do not know who waved that signal from the castle window?" demanded D'Rubiera, losing his patience.

"I do not," was the concise reply, made with the air of one who by an effort resolves to tell a lie rather than do worse.

There was a moment of silence. The duke perceived that his antagonist was getting the better of him, and that, the worst being true, he was acting honorably in a dishonorable cause. He perceived also that in such fencing the count was probably his superior,—he had that dexterity which the subject learn; while his own habit of command, not to speak of character, had taught him frankness. Fantini would certainly never cut any Gordian knots, but he would most certainly untie a good many, and tie a good many more.

The duke resumed his *hauteur* and his self-control. "I have a favor to ask, which I must insist upon," he said.

"I wish that you should promise me not to enter the castle again for a week, and to carefully avoid brushing away flies at the same moment that some one there finds it necessary to do the same thing,—that is, if you happen to be in the villa garden or in any public place."

The count made a very elegant bow. "Of course I obey you," he said. "There is no need of insisting. Your wish is sufficient."

D'Rubiera removed his feet from the path, the two exchanged a ceremonious salutation, and the count pursued his way to the piazza.

Silence again took possession of the scene; but what a sickening silence! The rocks that the sun shone on shimmered with heat, the branches of the trees seemed to sigh without moving. There was a sense of desolation in all that fulness of beauty. A grace and soul had faded out of it, leaving it empty. It was as though he had gathered a rose from a rose-bush and found that it was only painted paper or gauze, or tasted a glass of champagne and found that its sparkle was gone. The flavor had all gone out of his life.

Could it be Aurora?

He sat and looked after Fantini till he disappeared in the direction of the piazza, then rose and walked slowly toward the castle. "He may come down the other street," he thought. "But, oh, he does not come to visit Aurora. I will not believe it."

Giovanna, after waving her signal as agreed upon, had gone up the terrace stairs to look out toward the villa and see what would follow. The Signora Paula and Aurora had both retired to their rooms, and would not be visible for an hour or two. Gian was nodding under a tree in the garden, with a plate of cherries slipping off his knees, and Martina was nodding over her knitting in the kitchen. It was just the moment for a visitor to enter secretly. The street outside was deserted, and all the neighborhood was as still as though it were one o'clock of the night instead of the day.

There was a certain point in the terrace stairs which set out from the line of the castle wall, where once a balcony had been, and from this point there was an almost bird's-eye view of the villa gardens and the path leading to them from the castle. Looking out from here, herself hidden, Giovanna witnessed the interview between the duke and the Signor Clemente. It waked her quite up. She had been sleepy the moment before, and had promised herself a nap as soon as the count should be disposed of. When she saw him go toward the town, and the duke unmistakably coming to the castle, her heart began to beat uneasily. Something had happened. What did it mean? Was she herself going to have any trouble? At all events, she would be found in a position of lamb-like innocence, not peeping guiltily out from the house-top.

Hurrying down-stairs, she seated herself on the threshold of the *portone*, leaned against the side-post, dropped her chin on her breast, and went to sleep,—all in two minutes. Her ample person nearly filled the door-way, so that, though sleeping at her post, she was quite a sufficient obstacle to its being passed without her knowledge. She looked the very embodiment of faithfulness and simplicity as she sat there.

The duke passed through the Gola and entered the court with a prompt and ringing step. He had ordered his horse for a ride later on, and had his spurs on. He liked the familiar sound and feeling of spurs, and missed his dangling sword more than he had ever missed a friend.

Giovanna was too clever to overdo her part. She was merely in a light drowse, and started up before the gentleman had half crossed the court. It took her a moment to recognize him, and then she bowed in speechless surprise and confusion while inviting him to enter.

A peremptory wave of the hand silenced her.

"Come here," said the duke, stand-

ing where he was, a few paces from the door.

Giovanna became serious at once and obeyed him.

"How many people are there in this house?" he asked.

"There's the Signorina, and the Signora Paula, and Gian, and me," said Giovanna, counting them off on her fingers, "and there's Martina. That is five, Eccellenza."

"Who else is there?" demanded the duke. "Tell me every soul."

"There isn't another soul," the cook declared. "Eccellenza can ask the Signorina or the Signor Paula if there is. They are both asleep; but I will wake them up at once. *Favorisca.*"

He surely would not have so little "education" as to allow her to wake them, she reflected. And if he were put off he might change his mind about making an investigation, if that was his intention in coming, as seemed. To be sure, the duchess was evidently behind Rosina. Nevertheless, a man with spurs on, two deep creases between his eyebrows, and eyes that when they looked at you searchingly no more moved than if they were the eyes of a statue,—such a man was an object to tremble before.

"There is no young girl,—no servant-girl, I mean?" her inquisitor persisted, taking no notice of her compliments. His steady, searching eyes had not left her face for an instant.

"I swear that there is not a living soul in the house besides those whom I have named to your excellency!" Giovanna replied, with great solemnity, raising both hands and glancing upward.

"Oh, there's no need of swearing," the duke said negligently. "It doesn't make the thing any surer."

He nodded slightly and turned away, walked slowly through the Gola, stood a moment at the entrance from the street, then sauntered back toward the villa. And in all he scarcely knew what direction he took or what object he fixed his eyes upon.

It was, then, Aurora!

CHAPTER XVII.

LEAVING THE LUMP.

D'RUBIERA was not the only person who had seen those two signals.

Rosina had been very busy all the morning. She had gone on an errand for the duchess to the sindaco's wife, and, while waiting to see that lady, had confided to the chambermaid that just after luncheon the day before she had seen some one at the castle waving a handkerchief at the Signor Clemente down in the villa garden, and the Signor Clemente had gone up there at once.

As soon as Rosina had gone away, the chambermaid told the story to her mistress.

"It was the count's sister who called him up, of course," the lady said, somewhat indignantly. "You must be careful what stories you tell, Peppina. These people from the great cities have all sorts of ideas. If you only wipe your nose they think that you mean something particular by it."

Nevertheless, the Signora Passafiori did not forget the story. She liked Aurora sincerely, and was sorry that any one should speak lightly of her. She really hoped the dear girl had done nothing imprudent. But, if she had, it might be as well to know the truth, the lady concluded. How can you help or reprove a person if you do not know the facts of the case?

The result of this excellent reasoning was that a little after noon the signora took up her post in a shaded angle of the terrace which covered half the palace, and, with an opera-glass in her hand, set herself to see what might happen at the castle.

Nor was her watch in vain. Sure enough, plainly seen against the black old stones fluttered an unmistakable white signal, and shortly after a man's head was visible entering the Gola. She could see only the head,—only the hat, in fact, but it was a gentleman's hat, and there was every probability that it covered the head of Count Fantini.

"I am so sorry," murmured the lady, letting her glass drop with a feeling of real regret. "I didn't think it of Aurora. Even if they are going to be married, it isn't the proper thing to do; and he has declared that he cannot marry her. After all, the Suor Benedetta was right." And the lady sighed as she went down-stairs again to tell her husband what she had seen.

From the sindaco's Rosina went to the cathedral. She wished to confess her sins, and she asked for Don Matteo, a priest who lived with the bishop. Don Matteo, who had just finished saying a late mass, came at once.

Rosina knelt at the wicket, joined her hands palm to palm, asked the priest's blessing, and recited the first half of the Confiteor in Latin, all with the greatest propriety and recollection. She then proceeded to inform her spiritual father that it was a month and three days since her last confession, and that she had a load of sins on her sensitive conscience. She had once been in ill temper and had wilfully pulled the duchess's hair while dressing it. Secondly, she had omitted saying her prayers one night when the duchess had kept her up till two o'clock in the morning. Thirdly, she had eaten an ortolan on Friday, but then she had forgotten what day it was. She had also laughed in church once.

Lastly, she was very much afraid that she had been lacking in charity in something she had mentioned that very morning to the sindaco's chambermaid. And here came in the story of the signals at the castle.

"What! what! what!" stammered the priest. "You don't mean to say that the contessina—that is—what do you mean to say? What have you seen?"

Don Matteo was curious and credulous, though not ill-natured. He believed implicitly every story that was told him, and he listened to this and asked a dozen questions about it.

"You must not mention it to any other person," he said then. "It is some mistake. Probably the Signora

Paula was calling her brother. It might be a hundred other things. You should never tell a story which reflects on any one's character, particularly when the persons are your superiors. Don't mention it again, my child. Don't think of it. Don't look to see if the signal is repeated. It is not your affair. We have all of us enough to do in regulating our own conduct, without inquiring into that of other people. Remember this, my child. For your holy penance say five Our Fathers and five Hail Marias three times in church, and pray that you may be kept from backbiting and slander. And now make an act of contrition from the bottom of your heart, and I will give you absolution."

Rosina bowed herself down, called upon the holy name of God, declared that she was heartily sorry for all her sins and detested them from the bottom of her heart because they displeased Him, and firmly promised, by the assistance of divine grace, never more to offend, and to do all that she could to atone for her sins. The priest then gave her absolution in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and dismissed her with a "God bless you."

"She's a good, pious girl," he thought, as he took off his stole, kissed it, and hung it up inside of the confessional. "But—dear me! dear me!"

Rosina went to kneel down before the altar of the Most Holy, where she really gabbled over five Our Fathers.

"He will watch, and then tell the bishop," she thought gleefully.

She then went to the altar of the Madonna, and gabbled over five Hail Marias, and in a few minutes left the church, with the sweet and tranquil air of one who is at peace with heaven and earth.

Her next visit was to the convent of the Bambino Gesù. She had several pairs of the duchess's silk stockings, which Suor Benedetta's nuns were going to make over. They made over stockings so that you couldn't tell them from new, so soft and invisible were the seams. Only give her six pairs of worn

ones, and they would give you five pairs of new ones back.

It was past noon now, and the nuns had dined, and were having recreation in the garden. Rosina was taken there, but it soon became evident that she was uneasy and wished to speak to Suor Benedetta privately. She was not kept waiting.

"I have to ask a favor of you, dear suora," she whispered, when taken aside. "Will you let me go up and look out of the upper south corridor window a little while? I want to look toward the castle. I was sent to do it," she added, with a significant nod; and the suora understood that the duchess had sent her.

Certainly she could look out there as long as she liked. The nun accompanied her to the lofty upper corridor, at the end of which a great window looked off toward the castle, brought a chair out of an adjoining chamber, and opened a single-hinged pane of glass that the girl might see better.

"I have some work to do in this chamber," she said, indicating that from which she had taken the chair. "Stay as long as you like, but tap on the door when you are ready to go away."

Rosina smiled secretly as the nun shut the chamber door, and she stood for a moment listening. There was the faint sound of an inner door softly opened. This inner door led to a loggia, surrounded on its three sides with a close lattice, so that a person was perfectly concealed from outside view, while half the town spread out like a map below, many a secret nook visible which no one suspected could be seen from this point.

Rosina took her post, glancing at the little gold watch she carried in her belt. "Twenty minutes longer," she said, and smiled with the comfortable assurance that Suor Benedetta would watch the castle without winking even. She had come to make her watch it.

Two minutes after the signal was made, Rosina tapped at the chamber door. She was obliged to tap a second time, and then the suora came out, with a face alight with excitement.

"Have you looked as long as you want to?" she asked. "Of course you can stay just as long as you like. I am not going to ask you what you came to see. It isn't my affair."

"Oh, one can tell you anything, Suor Benedetta," said Rosina, kissing the nun's hand devoutly; and the two entered the chamber together and closed the door.

"I didn't encourage her one bit," the nun said to herself when the girl was gone. "And I didn't intimate that I thought it was Aurora. I am sure that I haven't sinned against charity in any way."

She examined her conscience a few minutes with a certain anxiety. "No," she said then, "I find nothing to accuse myself of;" and she went toward the chapel, where the nuns were gathering.

"But how could one think that Aurora would disgrace herself so!" she thought, passing outside the chapel door. "The duchess is right. Poor girl! I will pray for her, and I will not accuse her. But she cannot expect me to be the same toward her that I have been. I shall always be willing to receive her when she repents. *Asperge me*," and she took blessed water. "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

The suora was, in a material sense, as good as her word. Of course she thought it necessary to tell the story to her sister nuns, but she charged them not to repeat it outside the house. When Aurora's name was mentioned she maintained a stony silence. She tried to avoid meeting her, and, when she could not help speaking, showed a reserve that was worse than open accusation.

But the signals had still other witnesses. Not one of Rosina's shots had failed.

After hearing her confession, Don Matteo left the church and went toward the bishop's house, which was half-way down the street. At the door he paused a moment, then, instead of entering, walked on in the direction of the castle. He felt troubled. An old resident of

Sassovivo, he had known the former duke and the Countess Coronari, and he knew how dear Aurora had been to both and how they had guarded her. He had himself respected her highly: in fact, people in Sassovivo had generally looked on her as an exceptional person, and so far above all indelicacy that they never thought of observing her critically. No one expected to find an impropriety in her conduct.

And she had disgraced herself!

He was heartily sorry, or as heartily sorry as one can be for a misfortune which he does not dream of doing anything to avert or repair.

A friend of Don Matteo's, a clergyman also, lived in the last house in the street. He recollected that he had an errand with Don Carlo, and accordingly climbed the stairs to his room.

Don Carlo thought it a little strange that his visitor insisted on sitting by the sunny south window, not allowing him even to close the blinds; and he found him odd in other respects, too. It was not the hour for a call, and he prolonged his visit by every possible excuse, though he had evidently nothing to say. He merely sat and stared at the castle, seeming to be in a dream. But suddenly he waked up. "What! what! what!" he exclaimed, starting. Don Matteo shared his habitual expression with an English king. "What is this I see?"

Don Carlo came to see what had attracted his friend's attention, and the two remained there till they saw the duke enter the Gola. That is, they saw the head of a gentleman who entered there.

The affair was plain. Don Carlo declared that it was. This gentleman, whoever he might be, had come in answer to the signal. But who was he? and who had called him? and what did it all mean?

Don Matteo turned away sorrowfully, shaking his head. Don Carlo looked after him, nodding his own up and down. "It can't be the first time this has happened," he said. "It is evidently an affair which has been going

on for some time." And he looked at his visitor interrogatively.

Don Matteo, having got his information in the confessional, could make no explanation. He looked significant, shook his head, and went away without a word.

Perhaps he would have kept the spirit of his sacred obligations more truly if he had refrained from acting on what he had learned in the confessional as well as from speaking of it.

Don Carlo understood perfectly.

"He has heard of it in a way that he couldn't speak of, or he couldn't have held his tongue," he thought. "And he came here on purpose to look."

He himself looked out again toward the castle: "No, it isn't the first time, of course."

After a while he took his hat and breviary and went out. His rooms were warm, all looking southward, and there was a cool, shady space under a wall before the Gola, where he could read his Office much more comfortably.

Scarcely any one was abroad at this hour, and he could walk up and down without being disturbed.

This excellent man was no longer very young, but he was very fleshy and not accustomed to taking much exercise in the middle of the day. Besides, though shielded from the sun, he was also shut off from the air; and the promenade would not have misbecome the mouth of a furnace, as far as temperature was concerned. Large drops of perspiration rolled down one side of his face while he wiped the other, and a rivulet trickled down his spine. His face became purple, and he saw the psalms in his breviary as through a mist, and the Oremus in a thick fog. But he kept his post till the town awoke.

When two hours had passed, during which no one issued from the castle gate, Don Carlo returned home, exhausted and disappointed. The duke had left the castle court before he had reached it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BLOWING AGAINST THE WIND.

THE Duke of Sassovivo was chivalric even in his doubts of Aurora, or rather in his conviction that she had compromised herself. His rage and contempt were all for Count Fantini.

"It is nothing but her imagination," he thought. "She doesn't see the fellow as he is,—a comedian, an adventurer, without one grain of golden honor or of real self-respect. She has idealized him, and whatever she does is from some delicate and ideal feeling. She is not fallen. I cannot believe it. She is imprudent, and fancies that she is having a romance. Oh, foolish girl! what shall I do to save you?"

His only clear idea at first was to assure himself that Fantini kept his promise not to go to the castle. Of course his word was worth nothing. It was necessary to have him watched. D'Rubiera hated to set a spy, but there was no other way. Besides, Michele was prudent and secret.

"You are to watch and see that the count does not visit the castle," he said to the man. "If he goes there, let me know instantly. Keep your eye on him here without seeming to. Don't hang about the castle yourself, or do anything to attract attention in that way. And, Michele, don't imagine that you know why I set this task for you: do you hear?"

"Yes, signor colonel," said Michele, touching his hat in his usual grave way, but with a very unusual blush over his dark face.

In fact, Rosina had already told the whole story to Michele, in the strictest confidence, and made him swear not to mention it to his master.

"Make much of Michele, and you can get to know all of the duke's affairs," her mistress had said to Rosina. "But don't be seen with him, or the duke will suspect what you are about. I have seen the fellow staring at you."

Poor Michele! He had indeed stared at Rosina, as the girl was herself quite well aware. He stood aside, with his in-

significant figure and sober, plain face, and gazed at her as he might have gazed at some bright tropical bird which he must not touch, lest his rough hand should crush its plumage. And Rosina, fluttering about, all smiles, and rosy cheeks, and dimples, and small peremptoriness, had now and then given him a glance even before her mistress had recommended her to cultivate him. He had expected no more, nor even so much. But when she began to talk to him, make him little confidences, ask trifling services of him, and show sometimes that she watched for his coming and looked after him when he went, the simple fellow found himself in a fool's paradise. It seemed incredible. Yet, he reflected, his superb master loved him; and perhaps Rosina might love him for the same reason,—because he was devoted and faithful.

As yet, he had not told her anything of the duke's affairs. Two or three lies, which she had believed, had saved him. She had not believed that he could lie to her. But there was a good deal of quiet, harmless subtlety under his simple demeanor. Besides, infatuated as he was, it caused him no pain or shame to lie to her. But he felt both when obliged to lie to his master.

"What's the matter, Michele?" the duke asked, noticing his embarrassment. "Do you already know anything of the affair?"

"No, signor colonel, but I have seen the count waving his handkerchief at the castle. That is all."

"The deuce you have! And have you seen it more than once?"

"No, signor colonel; only once."

"Did you see any one reply?" demanded the duke, frowning.

"No," Michele replied again; and that was when he lied. "It wasn't a reply," he thought. "She waved first: his was the reply."

"Everybody sees! everybody knows!" the duke thought, reddening violently. "Well, Michele, do as I bid you, and keep a sharp watch on the count. Take one of my pistols, and keep it in your

pocket. If there is anything for me to see, fire off two shots quickly one after the other. If I don't hear the first, fire again."

"The duke has set you to watching the Signor Clemente," Rosina said to Michele that evening.

"No," said Michele, with a foolish smile.

"Now, don't tell me lies, Michele," the girl said jauntily. "I know it just as well as though you had told me. But I want you to tell me."

"It isn't true," Michele declared, trying to be loyal in spite of the dimpled hand on his arm and the dimpled cheek so near his shoulder. But he had to look down in order to resist them; and, what with his pain at having to deny his enchantress and his fear that she would succeed in making him betray his master, he became serious and a little severe.

"Oh, if you are going to act like that, I have nothing more to say," cried Rosina, with a toss of the head; and, marching away, she left him to his own bitter reflections.

It is not worth while to follow her manœuvres. Of course Michele, after having been flouted at by the girl for twenty-four hours, and after suffering all the misery his infatuation could inflict, yielded even more weakly than Samson to Delilah, and told her, not all, indeed, but enough to satisfy her.

"But you swear not to tell?" he said anxiously, and immediately half sorry for what he had done.

"Of course I won't tell a soul. Do you think it likely? See how suspicious you are. I tell you everything, and never ask a promise. And there is the duchess's bell."

He had not heard the bell; but then he was too much absorbed.

Rosina tripped up-stairs to her mistress. "The duke has set him to watch the count," she said gleefully. "I can prevent it, if you wish."

"No; let him watch," her mistress replied. "I wish him to see that Clemente has kept his promise."

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knows," D'Rubiera repeated to himself. "Poor, foolish girl! Dear, foolish girl!"

His whole disposition was undergoing a revolution. Aurora must not be blamed. What more natural than that she should wish to have a lover? There was nothing to criticise in that. After all, a woman to whom the idea of a lover was obnoxious would not be amiable. [The trouble was that she had chosen ill. Or perhaps she had not chosen at all. What opportunity of choice could Sassovivo give her? There was no one fit for her. She had been fascinated by the appearance of love, or what she believed to be love, in a man of suitable rank, and that fascination had blinded her to his character.

"Dear girl! she shall have a lover, and a true one," he thought. "If she can be content with the affection of a man who declares that he cannot marry her, she can be content with me. If an ideal and tender passion which respects her will make her happy, I will make her happy. She does not love that fellow. If she has ever felt love, it was for me. I have always had the thought in some secret corner of my heart that she belongs to me, that we shall neither of us ever love any one else as we love each other. I will give her myself to think of, to depend on, to wish for and look for. Whatever she wills in her lover she shall have from me. I will not rob her even of this fellow and leave her alone. She shall have gold in exchange for brass, and passion instead of egotism. It is not I who would ask you to wave me a signal from your window for all the world to see, my poetess!"

He was in a transport. Already he felt her hand in his, heard her telling him all her daily life and actions, bidding him come or go with a sweet familiarity, scolding him deliciously, putting all her cares on his broad shoulders.

D'Rubiera's early training and straitened means had kept him from boyish love-affairs, except of the most ethereal and evanescent character; and later, when he entered the army, ambition

and hard work had occupied his mind almost exclusively. This very virtue had made him an easy victim to the woman he married; and, if he had deteriorated under her influence and in his later life of wealth, indolence, and ennui, the thought of his children had still in some measure held him in check, and still more the almost unrecognized influence of Aurora Coronari. He read and re-read Aurora's poems till he knew them by heart; he subscribed for the periodicals for which she wrote, and smiled with a tender pride when he saw her name in print and read her praises. Without his being aware of it, his interest in her and the power of her genius had kept him on a higher plane than he would otherwise have reached or held. During the years which had passed without his seeing her, his imagination had pictured her as a creature crowned with stars, as something which materialism could never influence, all whose acts and thoughts were governed by an exquisite delicacy. Nor had anything in her look or manner when at last he met her been discordant with that glowing picture. She had even charmed him with some tender and pathetic graces acquired since their earlier meeting.

All this had kept open an upper sphere in his mind. He was like one of those men we see in old pictures gazing with upturned, glowing faces at angels and saints which float above and reward with glimpses of heaven the souls that for the sake of heaven have spurned the temptations of earth.

But Aurora an impassioned and imprudent woman!

It was a shock, but a shock which at length filled him with delight and longing. She was within his reach. If he had known her so at first, he could never have lived five years without seeing her. He could never have left her to marry another woman. She was a goddess no longer to him; but he loved her a thousand times more than ever, and anxiety, pity, and impatience stung that love to an engrossing passion. Jealousy had no place in his mind, nor any fear of any future rival. She had belonged to him

from the first, and he felt that he could satisfy her every wish.

Three days went by like a dream. He was fully and deliciously happy, so happy that he put off speaking to Aurora or visiting the castle. It was enough for those first days that he knew her his and that Fantini did not go to the castle.

On the afternoon of the third day he saw her enter the sindaco's house, and at once resolved to meet her when she should come out and accompany her home. But she remained so long that he was forced to go or attract attention by waiting. "I will go up to the castle after dinner," he thought. "How rosy her cheeks were to-day!"

There are roses and roses. Some bloom and others burn. Aurora's roses were of fire that day; and her heart—she could not have told what she felt if she had tried. She had come to ask the Signora Passafiori some questions, and she began the moment they were alone.

"Dear friend," she said, clasping the lady's hand,—and the signora noticed that Aurora's hands were cold, though her cheeks were so hot,—"what has happened to every one I know in Sassovivo? I met the bishop last night, and he passed me quite coldly. I went to see Suor Benedetta this morning, and for the first time in my life was not admitted. They said that she was particularly engaged, and could not say when she would be able to see me. Three or four others whom I have seen are changed. There seems to be something strange going on, or else I am ill and morbid,—which I do not think. Even you are not quite the same. What is it?"

The signora was slightly embarrassed. She did not like to commit herself by telling, yet so appealed to she could hardly refuse to tell. But, to gain time and escape if possible the disagreeable necessity, she parried Aurora's question with another.

"Are you not conscious of having done anything imprudent which might displease your friends?" she asked, with a somewhat severe air.

"Not at all," Aurora replied, opening her eyes very wide with astonishment and alarm. "What could I do? I am living just as I have lived for some time. If I have done anything, it would be some trifle of which I was unaware."

"We cannot be too careful," said the signora, casting her eyes down and looking very cold.

"Of course we must be careful," Aurora returned, lifting her head with a slight haughtiness. "I presume that I am so. And, as I do not dwell upon or presume to punish any of those little mistakes which I do not doubt I might find in the conduct of all my friends if I set myself to criticise them, I do not see why they should perform that office for me. But," she added, her pride suddenly failing and her eyes filling with tears, "it cannot be that. It must be something serious. You know what it is, and it is cruel not to tell me. Who will tell me if you do not?"

"Well, Aurora," the lady said, "it is all over town that you are having a very imprudent intimacy with Count Fantini. People have seen signals waved from your windows and answered by him, and say that he went up to the castle immediately after, at an hour when it is not customary to make visits unless they are intended to be very private. This would not look well if you were going to marry him. But I myself have heard him declare that, though he admires you, he has no intention of proposing marriage. In fact, I was displeased at what he said and at the jests which drew the remark from him. I thought then that he could have replied without seeming to assume that he might marry you if he would."

The Signora Passafiori had known Aurora all her life; but she had never seen the woman who rose before her as the meaning of her story became plain. Was Aurora Coronari so tall? Could those soft lineaments look so like sculptured marble? Where had the sweet mouth learned its curve of scorn, those liquid eyes their fire?

"I wishful to marry the Count Fantini!" she said, and stood, as if sitting

her soul were cramped. "I calling him with signals and receiving him at unreasonable hours! I never see him except in the presence of his sister, and I am polite to him only out of regard for her. And the cold looks I meet are for this!" She paused a moment, and, with her sparkling eyes looking straight before her over her companion's head, seemed to be thinking rapidly and gathering up the threads of the story in her mind. Then, "Who told you this?" she asked, without lowering her eyes.

The signora was impressed. "I do not feel at liberty to give any names," she said, "and I hope, dear, that you will not mention mine; I shouldn't wish to be drawn in; but I really hope that you will have no difficulty in putting a stop to the talk."

Aurora's glance sank to the lady's face, shrinking a little at that moment with conscious meanness. And this was her life-long friend, and the mother of several daughters! A woman of some authority, too, who might have been a protection to her!

"I will not mention your name," Aurora said, with a quiet scorn.

The signora began a confused speech of mingled thanks and deprecation and regrets, which her visitor interrupted at the first pause:

"You say that this story is all over town?"

"I am afraid it is, dear," the lady said, shaking her head. "You know Sassovivo is such a gossiping place. I would go and talk with the bishop, if I were you. That is," she said, suddenly correcting herself, "I suppose he knows. If he has heard, he can advise you."

The signora had already talked the matter over with Monsignor herself.

Aurora made a step toward the door, recollected herself, and turned to make a somewhat formal salutation, then turned away again.

"You know, I thought it my duty to tell you," said the Signora Passafiori, following her.

"Oh, of course," replied Aurora ab-

sently, and went out without another word.

There were two gates leading from the court-yard,—one into the piazza, where the duke waited, and the other into a narrow back street. Aurora entered the latter. For one moment she stood there motionless, for her head felt dizzy. It seemed as though a tornado were whirling her about and singing in her ears. Then she hastened homeward.

"I must collect myself. I must do nothing and say nothing till I have thought the matter over," she said. And it was her only clear idea. All else was chaos.

Giovanna stood near the kitchen door as she entered, and glanced at her stealthily with an uncertain expression at once watchful and apprehensive. Aurora noted the look. The confusion of her mind did not prevent her observing. "Giovanna knows," she thought.

Reaching her chamber, she rang the bell with decision. Giovanna appeared instantly, with an air of obsequious eagerness which betrayed her to the clear eyes of her mistress. Giovanna was an impatient person, and capable of being impatient. Obsequiousness with her was a sign of guilt.

"What are your orders, contessina?" she asked, with immense respectfulness and amiability.

"Giovanna, tell me what you know of this talk which they are making of me in the town," Aurora commanded, looking at the woman steadily.

Guilt showed in every feature of the cook's face. "Talk of you, signorina! Who could talk of you? There isn't a word that can be said. I haven't heard a breath of anything. Nobody would dare to say a word to me of the signorina." She paused.

Aurora regarded her steadily, without a word.

"I swear that I haven't heard a syllable," Giovanna went on, with increased fervor. "May God strike me dead if I have!"

"Who is it that waves a signal from the window here after breakfast?"

"Waves a signal!" gasped Giovanna, with loud astonishment. "Nobody waves a signal. Who could? It is somebody sees me when I dust the dining-room and shake the cloth out of the window."

"Oh, it was you, then!" said Aurora. And, ignoring the woman's presence and her repeated declarations of innocence, she sat piecing up out of the fragments she had learned a plan of the whole affair. She had seen Rosina come to the castle when no message was brought to herself or to the Signora Paula; and Giovanna had not mentioned her having been there. There had been to her mind something stealthy in the girl's manner of entering, looking about at all the windows before passing the gate. She had neglected, however, to glance up at the parapet of the roof-terrace, where Aurora leaned, looking down.

Clear and easy to understand in all its parts, the plan unfolded itself before her mind,—the effort of the duchess to get her out of the castle, her sudden relinquishment of the subject, Rosina's visits, Giovanna's confusion, and the stories in the town.

"I will not give you the trouble of dusting my dining-room any longer," she said calmly, when her mind was made up. "Find yourself another place at once. I may send you away to-morrow. You will certainly go this week,—you and Gian."

Giovanna attempted an expostulation, but was speedily stopped.

"Do not speak any more on the subject. It will make no difference," her mistress said. "Go and tell the Signora Paula that I should be obliged to her if she could conveniently come to me for a few minutes."

The Signora Paula came, and to her Aurora told her story with a calmness which looked almost like peacefulness, there seemed so little effort in it.

"But, my dear contessina, this is simply ridiculous!" her companion exclaimed. "Who could credit such a story? I will see Clemente and the duchess about it immediately. It is

some servant's gossip. Who pays any attention to what servants say?"

"Most of the stories that go about are servants' stories, or servants are made the means of propagating them," Aurora replied. "Mamma used to say that it is the servants who rule society in Italy."

"I will speak at once to Clemente and the duchess," repeated the Signora Paula. "With permission, I will go down after dinner."

"As you like," said Aurora, as though she expected no good from the visit. "And I must ask you to request the Count Fantini not to come here any more."

The Signora Paula reddened. "Of course he will not come if his visits displease you," she said stiffly.

Aurora remained silent.

The signora rose. "If you have nothing else to command?" she said.

Aurora bowed. "Thanks. There is no more to say, I think," she said.

The signora went toward the door and turned there. "Unless, perhaps, you find my presence also in your house a displeasure," she said, between anger and grief.

"I have treated you as a friend, and found no fault with you personally," Aurora replied quietly. "You are, of course, free to do as you like. I have intimated no wish to separate myself from you."

The signora went out without another word, wiping her eyes. She would have poured out her heart in gratitude and affection but for the slight to her brother. For Clemente to be dismissed in that cool manner, as if he were nobody, it was a little too much.

Martina met her old mistress in the corridor, and there was a banging of doors down-stairs and a sound of loud weeping from Giovanna and of expostulations and questions from her husband.

"She's dismissed, signora," whispered Martina, with a smile of satisfaction.

"And so am I," sobbed the lady.

Martina opened a chamber door, drew her mistress in, and shut the door behind them. It took but a few minutes

for her to draw out all that the Signora Paula had to tell; but she had but little comfort to bestow.

"If it's about the Sign' Clemente, then we are lost," she said, sinking into a chair. "I thought it was something else."

And then it came out that Martina had been in the corridor when Giovanna waved her napkin out of the dining-room window, and had not been so drowsy

when the duke came into the court-yard but that she recognized his voice and gathered the drift of his questions.

"What can it mean?" murmured the count's sister. "She doesn't like Clemente. I always felt that."

"It is a trick of madama's to get rid of the contessina," whispered Martina in her mistress's ear.

MARY AGNES TINCKER.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ROME AND THE CAMPAGNA.

A CHRISTMAS RAMBLE.

IT was on Christmas day that my friend and I set off for a tramp out into that wilderness lying beyond the walls of Rome and known as the Campagna,—a wilderness in its sense of desolation, but teeming with a beauty peculiarly its own, for nature is there busy in growing her ivies from the ashes of the dead of countless generations, and in adorning with the graces of vegetation the mighty ruins that remain as their record. The bells were ringing their merry clangor in the clear sparkling air, the visitors to mass hurried along in the most brilliant of holiday costumes, the artists' models who linger up and down the Via Sistina, waiting for engagements, were flocking to their usual haunts, and the army of the lame, the halt, and the blind, together with the venders of Madonna-wares, were at their posts on the steps of the three hundred churches that lift their crosses heavenward in the capital city of Christendom. The principal shops were closed, but the streets were filled with an eager, happy throng, who exchanged the salutations of "*Buona Festa*" with each other with all the earnestness and enthusiasm of grown-up children. There were garlands and wreaths of flowers decorating the rudely carved or painted images of the Virgin

Mary at the corners or in the niches of vacant walls, before which the mountaineers of the Abruzzi used to play their bagpipe *novenas* in the palmy days when Papal authority reigned supreme. They have abandoned this time-honored and picturesque custom as one productive of little profit under the Victor Emanuel dynasty. But the Trasteverians, or Trans-Tiburtine dwellers, who date their origin so far back that it staggers one to think of the years which have flown by, and whose ancestors are reputed to have a distinct remembrance of the she-wolf that suckled Romulus and Remus, were out in force, and, with their steeple hats and short blue jackets buttoned with brass, formed no inconsiderable feature in the popular demonstration. Here and there might be seen lads or liveried servants hurrying with packages concealing rich presents, or with massive bouquets, the belated tributes from lovers to fair mistresses. At the caffès the tables were blooming with flowers, and each visitor was greeted with an illustrated Christmas-card, whereon were inscribed the good wishes of those who had served him for the year, and for which he was expected to leave a franc or two as a gratuity. All

was life and laughter and joyousness, even the beggars forgetting their melancholic demeanor in the emotional aspects of the great festival which annually stirs the heart of Rome.

Our way for a long distance led through the more crowded portion of the city, in the direction of the spider-net of streets of which the Ghetto is the focal point. The cries of the *venditori*, or market-dealers, who frequent that paradise of old clothes, where every shop is like a cellar reeking with strange smells and choking with the refuse garments of half a dozen generations, soon gave indication that we had passed the boundary-line of Christianity and entered the Piazza del Pianto,—or place of tears,—a spot where Christmas and its joys are as uncared for as in the wilds of Ethiopia. Above loomed tall buildings, stained and lichened with years, the streets between being so narrow that the little strip of sky overhead seemed as if heaven were afar off and the glad sunlight could scarcely ever find its way down among the winding passages and grim arches beneath which hoarse-voiced men and shrill-tongued women cried their wares, the *roba vecchia* of ages. Here in the windowless shops, whose doors always stand open both for light and customers, were the same venerable types of Israel that grouped on Mount Calvary over eighteen hundred years ago, and gleaming out from masses of tangled hair shone the same lustrous eyes of the daughters of Jerusalem who wept over the scenes of the crucifixion and whose beauty has not been obliterated by even their centuries of degradation. The purity of the race has been partially lost, but, though paying tribute successively to both Pagan and Christian, and tempted to concessions in its avoidance, they have held as rigidly to ancient customs and traditions as if during this long roll of ages an adamant wall had encircled them.

It needed an eye of constant watchfulness to thread one's way through such a human hive, for not only are the com-

plications of the streets in their outgoings and incomings sufficient to puzzle the oldest Roman, but they are also overhung from upper windows with protruding clothes-lines to such an extent as to present little distinction one from another. In addition, and more confusing than all, was the ceaseless din of voices, for the narrow passages were as full as the darksome houses, out of which a ragged humanity ebbed and flowed as the tides of the sea. Tall, gaunt women and short, stout ones, all of unmistakably Hebraic origin, crowding the door-ways, and industriously plying the needle in renovation of faded garments, shed perhaps from princely shoulders,—hordes of dirty children sprawling on the pavement, for sidewalks there are none,—lines of donkeys with laden panniers on either side, drooping their long ears in solemn procession,—and innumerable venders of vegetables, howling the excellencies of their wares in language far more choice than the reality, combined to make the spot a miniature pandemonium, so that the visitor is satisfied with even a brief survey of this despised remnant of a race whose financial prosperity has been unaltered either by the exactions of the Pagan or the persecutions of the Christian.

It was cheery, after picking one's footsteps among the dingy walls and gruesome shops of the children of Israel, to come out into the sunlight and brightness shed over the ancient Forum and the Palatine Hill, which one can never pass without lingering for a new thought, a fresh impression, always to be found in the giant relics of imperial days. Our course was along the Via Sacra, passing under the Arch of Titus, through which that emperor led his captive Jews on his return from the siege of Jerusalem,—the ancestors of the tribes of to-day in the Ghetto,—and on past the Colosseum, that wonderful monument of the Flavian period, the arena of which has been so often reddened with rivers of Christian blood, and which, despite the spoliation of nations, still stands, the

mightiest and grandest structure in its ruin that the world ever beheld. Beyond came a long stretch of road between walls of stone, with many a curiously-arched gate-way pendent with ivy, behind which ripened the wealth of vineyards and gardens or glistened the silver sheen of the olive against the far-off blue, until at length we reached the Porta San Sebastiano, of all the gates of Rome the most distant from its centre. Without begins the ancient Via Appia, the famous street of the dead, which for eight miles leads away among the crumbling tombs that line it on either side.

We were now nearing the open Campagna, which lay before us like a wonderful panorama, swept with long cloud-shadows, and sparkling at intervals with patches of sunshine, while here and there moss-grown towers or the remnant of some forgotten tomb peered out from a breadth of dark, like more solemn notes in the sombre strain of which they formed a part. On the left, in a green valley, was the great circus of Romulus, the outline of its vast amphitheatre marked by the low ranges of stone seats, while at either end of the long central division were visible half-fallen structures, around which wheeled the Roman chariots two thousand years ago. A few cattle, grazing peacefully on the sod that overgrows its track, were the only occupants, lifting their heads and deigning a look of inquiry as we passed. In front, and on an eminence overlooking the country for many miles, rose the tomb of Cecilia Metella, the daughter of Crassus, one of the noblest monuments ever erected to the memory of woman, which has by its solidity of construction preserved its form unimpaired for twenty centuries.

The Campagna of Rome, which may be favorably viewed in its general aspect from this elevated point, is a great stretch of country, varying from twenty to forty miles in width, and extending along the coast of the Mediterranean from the borders of ancient Etruria in a southerly direction for at least a hundred miles, until it loses itself in

the foothills of the Volscian Mountains where they converge toward the sea. The predominating character of this immense area, where have been enacted so many events in the histories of both Pagan and Christian, is that of an undulating upland plain at its northern extremity, where it joins the Sabine Mountains, but gradually descending with many a break and ribboned streamlet until it finally melts into the long level vistas of the Pontine marshes. On the east rise in classic grandeur of outline the Alban Mountains, the bases of which are accented by the villages of Frascati, Marino, Grotta Ferrata, and other minor hamlets, sparkling like clusters of jewels from out the darker ground of vineyards and olive-groves behind. Higher up, and overlooking the mirror-like lake of Albano, which occupies the crater of an ancient volcano, sits Castel Gondolfo, for many years the summer residence of the Popes. Above all towers Monte Cavo, the highest point of the Alban range, whose summit is crowned by a Passionist convent, erected from the remains of the Temple of Jupiter Latiaris, memorable as the common meeting-place for the forty-seven cities which formed the Latin Confederation. Just under the brow of the mountain, and clinging as it were around a pinnacle of lava, is solidly built the town of Rocca di Papa, or Rock of the Pope. Beyond lies the Plain of Hannibal, so called from its having been the camp of the Carthaginian army during the famous campaign against Rome and Tusculum. Extending half-way across the northern end of the Campagna is the great range of the Sabine Mountains, whose lofty summits are clothed with the robes of winter's snow almost to the end of June, and whose scarred sides are written over with the records of centuries of storms. Looking down over Tivoli at the left, and southward toward the plain of Pantano and the clustering pines that mark the site of ancient Gabii, is the gigantic peak of Monte Gennaro, which seems the one sleepless sentinel of the groups that

bound the great amphitheatre in which the Eternal City sits, white-towered and steeped, amid her ruins,—the key-note of wonders in a wonderful land.

It was out into this charmed circle that we wandered, a circle bordered on the one side with rich and varied mountain-lines and on the other by the coral-washed shores of the bluest of seas, between which sweeps away in billow after billow of undulating land the drear and melancholy waste of the Roman Campagna. Yet, drear and melancholy as it is in the decay of the giant ruins that mark its sunniest slopes, there is an almost unexplainable beauty in its atmosphere, a mysteriousness in its long perspective receding away into an intangible distance, and a glory in its marvellous combinations of color, that take captive the senses and lead one to linger long and to love even its aspects of sadness. One feels, too, that one is treading in the very footprints of history, that the vast solitude of waving verdure once resounded to the clash of contending legions, whose life-blood reddened the streams now flowing so dreamily in the valleys, and that even the grass at one's feet is nourished by the ashes of unnumbered thousands who have heroically gone to their nameless graves that empires might rise or fall.

Except for the tall clumps of pines which rear their umbrella-like forms in groups around some venerable ruin, and at rare intervals a cluster of evergreen oaks sheltering a wayside fountain, or some scanty willows skirting the streams, this great waste is a treeless plain, a silent sunland, peopled by herds of long-horned cattle and the still wilder buffaloes that wander in freedom from restraint like the veritable lords of the soil that they are. Here and there on the roads diverging from Rome are solitary *osterie*, or taverns, the only signs of human habitation, and frequented mostly by herdsmen. The fronts of these are usually decorated with rude paintings and hung with dried boughs around the doors as a notice of the quality of the wine within. The tenants are swarthy *contadini*, whose sal-

low countenances betoken a continuous struggle between the native vigor of their constitutions and the physical discomforts of a life entirely primitive in its nature.

It was at one of these lonely inns that we sat down to a humble meal. Over its arched stone entrance was a representation of the Virgin and Child, on this occasion adorned with green. On one side stood a crudely-executed and nearly unclothed figure in color of Fortune on her wheel, while its pendant on the other hand was a peasant drinking from a huge bottle, and bearing beneath the inscription, "*Forte Maestro Raffaello*" (Strong Master Raphael). Within were arranged between the posts that supported the vaulted roof a series of rough benches and tables, around which sat a dozen men drinking wine and at intervals fighting off the score of chickens and doves which were allowed free range and disputed possession of the remnants of a meagre fare. Besides their short jackets and hats with the omnipresent feather, these untutored examples of humanity wore long-haired leggings to the knees, like the fauns of old, from whom they might have been descended. At the remote end of the room was a fireplace, with its begrimed and ancient crane and kettles, beneath which blazed a cheery fire of brush-wood. Some colossal mural paintings occupied the spaces between the timbers, chief among which was one of a cock in a gorgeous suit of green and gold, underneath being inscribed the significant lines,—

Quando questo gallo canterà,
Allora credenza si farà.

The substance of which is, that when this cock crows credit will be given,—a humorous and rhythmical manner of suggesting the rule of the house. The entire place was redolent of dirt and picturesqueness, and furnished a most appropriate background for the groups of ragged and unkempt peasantry who gossiped and wrangled over their petty affairs in genuine accordance with the law of limitation in vision.

Beneath the Campagna of Rome lies

yet another world,—the world of the catacombs,—which was once even more populous than the city itself, a labyrinth of passages lined with graves on the sides and opening at short distances into arched areas with rude chapels and altars, where the early Christians not only worshipped, but dwelt, to escape the martyrdom of which their hunted souls forever stood in dread. Miles upon miles of these yet unexplored caverns underlie and branch in every direction from Rome,—the melancholy streets in a great city of the dead, where more than six millions of human beings have been laid away in their recordless graves. Into one of the openings we descended, over moss-grown and vine-tangled steps, picking our way cautiously along the narrow footpaths, and pausing occasionally to examine by the dim light of our tapers the scriptural subjects, which, however primitive in execution, gave evidence of having been born of a deep religious fervor. There were ghastly skeletons, too, perhaps of those who wrought them, and who passed years in these subterranean solitudes, where sunlight and the gladdening song of birds never enter, that they might be unmolested in the faith which now walks abroad at noonday and is the glory of the civilized world. There is a peculiar sense of awe in penetrating these deep recesses and clambering among the remains of those who were laid away for their eternal sleep over fifteen centuries ago, and in the realization that the individual man is but an atom among the forgotten millions whose crumbling bones moulder in their narrow cells there comes a creeping of the flesh and a crushing of the little vanities of life that is good for the human soul. And in contrast to these net-works where death and decay reign supreme, one emerges to find the mysteriousness and desolation of the Campagna above, a scene of brightness and beauty in which even the lone daisies that lingered into December seemed as radiant gems set in the sombre tones of the great desert of ancient grandeur.

We rambled along under the shadows of gigantic aqueducts that led away like a pilgrimage of camels on the Desert of Sahara, or past huge masses of masonry that reared their castellated forms from the highest slopes, or lingered to watch the graceful curves of some idle streamlet, where innumerable herds of cattle browsed on the tender bits of green bordering its banks. We tarried awhile among the ilexes which form the Wood of Egeria, in search for the nymph, whom we saw afar off, but who disappeared at our approach, leaving us in the vaguest of mysteries. She was only a peasant-girl swinging playfully from the lower limb of a tree, but she faded away, nevertheless, and we looked at each other, and then at the open Campagna that surrounded us on every side, in almost mute wonderment that so real and substantial a nymph could so easily vanish from our sight. But the homeward warning came with the lengthening shadows, and we reluctantly left our maiden and her mystery unsolved.

The sun never set more gloriously upon the Eternal City than on that Christmas night. Every tower and dome was illuminated with a flood of rosy light that died away in the most exquisite perspective of tones over the Campagna, daintily touching the snow-capped summits of the Alban and Sabine Mountains in the remoter distance. And as we approached the city, bathed in a splendor surpassing the possibilities of depiction either by pen or pencil, and later mingled with the gay crowds who sang their Christmas carols or danced to the music of mandolins under the festoons of brilliantly-colored lanterns which were hung across the piazzas, there came also to our minds visions of pale ghosts haunting the columned chambers of that city of the dead,—ghosts of the millions who knew Christmas only as a day of fear and sorrow and one on which to cherish in trembling secrecy their images of the Babe of Bethlehem.

DWIGHT BENTON.

A SLEEP.

NO more the Violets lift their wondering eyes;
 No more the Columbine, alert and gay,
 Tosses her graceful head in airy play;
 No more the Mayflower plans her sweet surprise;
 No "hide-and-seek" now with *Linnæa* shy,
 No "hunt the lady's slipper" in the wood,
 No glad "I spy!" in merry autumn mood
 With blue-eyed *Gentian*. Low and still they lie,
 The pretty darlings, tired of summer play,
 Cradled upon their nurse's ample breast,—
 The brown old Earth, who hushes them to rest
 With tales of gnome and dryad, nymph and fay,
 While Mother Nature comes, in love, to throw
 O'er all the soft white comfort of the snow.

E. S. F.

THE BISMARCKS.

THE old Marches, where the Bismarcks took root, and where Prince Bismarck was born,—in the village and lordly manor of Schoenhausen,—lie in the very heart of Prussia, a poor, flat country extending north of Magdeburg on both sides of the river Elbe, principally on the left side. In the year 843 of our era the old Marches were occupied by the Wends, a Slavonian people, who had probably entered the country with the mixed horde that followed the standard of Attila. Against these Wends, idolaters and polygamists, a German crusade was begun, stimulated by the appetite for conquest of every kind so general at that time. There first arrived in all the commercial towns of the Wends peaceable merchants and industrious workmen from Saxony or the Low Countries, who established themselves as residents. These studied the country and prepared the way. Next some rich and courageous German would form what was called an "enterprise." He

would raise a troop of mercenaries and adventurers, enter unceremoniously these idolatrous districts, take possession of some town, of which he would become the "judge," and near this town would erect a "*burg*," in order to install there his men-at-arms and distribute fiefs to his principal lieutenants. After him would appear the priest and the Benedictine monk, followed in turn by a multitude of colonists, to whom was given the tenancy of the fiefs and of the lands remaining free. The old Marches, Germanized in this way, grew into the Marches or Marks of Brandenburg, the nucleus from which have been successively evolved the kingdom of Prussia, the North German Confederation, and the new German Empire.

It required three centuries to achieve the conquest of this country and to plant there German civilization, or rather a barbarism less rude than that which had existed under the rule of the Wends. Toward the middle of the

twelfth century the worship of the sun was still universal on the borders of the Elbe, and as late as the end of the fourteenth there was no mingling together of men and women at any of the national festivities.

The commanders of the *burgs* became the founders of the equestrian families of the old Marches, of whom six took the lead, and whose chiefs were called *Schlossgessene*. The Bismarcks, first established at Burgstall, near the town of Steindal, but transferred toward the end of the sixteenth century to Schoenhausen in consequence of troubles with the Elector John George, are one of these six families, the flower of the feudality of the country. Such at least is the pretension of the Chancellor. This was contested, with some malice, at the time when he liked most to boast of being a pure Junker. Some indiscreet investigators discovered that the Bismarcks of the equestrian order are the Bismarcks of Priegnitz, and not the Bismarcks of Burgstall. These last, on the contrary, were plebeians, enriched by commerce at Bismarck, formerly an important town of the district of Steindal, who took the name of their native place and with this usurped appellation established themselves in the chief town of the district. There the first positive information to be had of them shows them as members of the town council and of the very unaristocratic corporation of the *Schwand-Schneider*, or merchant-tailors. This joke at one time greatly amused and somewhat irritated the Chancellor: he did not fail to reply that his Grace the Duke of Wellington must also have been a breeches-maker, since he belonged to the Tailors' Guild of London. The argument is good, though not unanswerable. But what does it matter? At Berlin from 1848 to 1864 the question was perhaps an exciting one; for history the real Bismarcks are those from whom is descended the Chancellor of the German Empire.

There have been fifteen of these Bismarcks in a direct line from the present prince back to the first whose name

has been preserved, at the beginning of the fourteenth century. It is a stock of powerful essence, fertile in men marked with the stamp of energy, with numerous collateral shoots, all savoring of the soil of the old Marches. If one could crush and fuse in a kind of psychological furnace Jarno, the cool diplomatist and free-handed soldier of "Wilhelm Meister," Councillor Krespel, with his adroit and methodical eccentricities, an old baron of the Baltic coast, such as Hoffmann has presented to us in the "Majorat," and a pinch of Mephistopheles, and if through the product obtained by this process one could pass, as by an electro-fantastic current, a dash of the phantom hussar of Bürger's "Lenore," we should have the personality of the Bismarcks.

The first three died excommunicated, beginning with Rulo, tailor and municipal councillor of the town of Steindal according to the envious, honorary tailor, at most, according to Prince Bismarck. In 1309, Rulo endeavored to establish at Steindal schools for the people,—*Volkschule*,—which were to be exempt from ecclesiastical direction. This was what brought upon him the censure of the Church. After him his son, Klaus I., had the idea of a secular hospital: hence a second excommunication, which it appears was borne, like the first, with a good deal of philosophy. This Klaus I. was the chief politician of the family before the great Bismarck. He ended his career toward the middle of the fourteenth century, at a time when the descendants of Albert the Bear had become extinct and Brandenburg was the subject of a disputed succession between the Houses of Bavaria and Luxembourg, to say nothing of the last descendant, real or pretended, of the race of Ascania. Klaus I. contributed to save the Marches from dismemberment. Rich, valiant, and shrewd, he served his country with his sword, his counsel, and his purse, and with unlimited devotion. Four centuries or more before the creation of the kingdom of Prussia, Klaus I. was already what the actual Bismarck has boasted of being,—a *Stock-Preusse*,—

that is, a thorough Prussian, a Prussian to the very core. He knew nothing of the Holy Roman Empire, which was never more than an historical phrase: he knew only the real living state of Brandenburg, with its well-ordered discipline established by the Princes of Ascania, with its free nobility, its free peasantry, and its Diet which, when it voted for taxes, always inquired into the disposition of the money. Invested with the title of Hofmeister, he eliminated from the government every German who was not a born native of the Marches, and he courageously defended the young state against the emperor Charles IV., who attempted to absorb it into his hereditary domains. On his tomb was engraved the simple epitaph, *Nicolaus de Bismarck, miles.*

None of his descendants, before the advent of the greatest of the race, seem to have equalled him in genius, but they were all powerful and original men, leading a life of hardy adventure, going about the world wherever there were good blows to give and to receive,—especially to give,—but almost all coming home to die. The Bismarcks have little taste for playing the part of the anvil. In the sixteenth century there was a Bismarck of the name of Ludolph, who in his quality of Rittmeister made a campaign against the Turks. There was another who served in Sweden, and still another, Augustus, the fourth from the Chancellor, who died a colonel in the service of the Grand Elector, but who had begun his career in the service of France. Yes, of France! It is whispered that the Chancellor does not like any allusion to this fact. The biographers inspired by him confine themselves to telling us in vague terms that Augustus von Bismarck fought "for liberty of conscience" in the Swedish army and in the Count Palatine's regiment, that he was admitted after the battle of Nordlingen into the corps of Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, and that in 1640 he was fighting in Lorraine and in Burgundy. Unluckily, it is not difficult to verify by precise details this vague and general information, as it

was after the disaster at Nordlingen that Bernard of Saxe-Weimar concluded with Richelieu the treaty of "the four millions." Augustus von Bismarck was, in fact, what was then called a soldier of fortune, in the pay of the King of France. The wars and battles in which he was engaged in Lorraine and Burgundy can have been none other than the series of never-to-be-forgotten manœuvres of Bernard of Saxe-Weimar in 1634-35, which resulted in the transfer of Alsace to France!

The great-grandfather of Prince Bismarck, Augustus Frederick, was also a colonel. He commanded, in the reign of Frederick William I., the cavalry regiment of Anspach-Baireuth. He was the true type of a colonel of dragoons, after the very heart of the Corporal King. The little town of Gullnow, where his regiment was quartered, still rings with the legends of Colonel Augustus Frederick. He was rough and aggressive, an eager huntsman, killing a hundred head of big game in the year, filling the quiet streets of Gullnow with the noise of his dogs and horses. In winter, when he would entertain his officers, at each toast the trumpets would sound, and a picket of dragoons would salute each draught with a discharge from their carbines. The repast over, they went out in procession with lights and torches, headed by the band of the regiment. The colonel, picking up all the dragoons he met idling in the streets, would lead them in military bacchanalia—

mit Sing und Sang,

Mit Paukenschlag und Kling und Klang—

as far as the bridge of Ihna, where stood a wooden instrument of regimental discipline. Then, "Comrades," he would cry, "punishment is abolished! throw the form into the water." The poor dragoons of Anspach-Baireuth would obey without enthusiasm, knowing well that on the morrow the colonel, who was a martinet and only liked a joke after supper, would set up another form and punish without mercy the first breach of discipline. This eccentric personage, whose talents were held in

especial esteem by Frederick II., died the death of the brave at Chotusitz, at the age of forty-seven.

He had a cousin as whimsical as himself, Ludolf Augustus, whose whims, however, were not always unlucky. The folly of the Bismarcks consists in an audacity that goes straight for the goal and generally reaches it. One fine day at Magdeburg, Ludolf Augustus, who was then lieutenant-colonel, coming out from dinner had the misfortune to kill a lackey. He hid the body under his bed, and left the garrison as if nothing had happened. Killing the lackey might have passed without observation, but quitting his regiment without leave was a crime toward which Frederick William I. was less disposed to be lenient than any other prince of his family. Ludolf Augustus was forced to take refuge in Russia. On his arrival at St. Petersburg he married the sister-in-law of Biren, the celebrated favorite of the empress Anne, and, thanks to the influence of his brother-in-law, rose to the rank of general. After an exile in Siberia, which at that time was obligatory upon all conspicuous personages of the court, he was named Ambassador, was subsequently made a governor of provinces, and finally died at Pultawa, commander-general of the Ukraine.

Thus we see that the Bismarcks were a race of Centaurs and Nimrods, cuirassiers, dragoons, carbineers, and, at a pinch, diplomatists, skilful in carrying out whatever was given them to do, not less skilful in pushing their own fortunes. Their life was a steeple-chase: they never went round an obstacle, they preferred to surmount it.

In this museum of shrewd warriors one meets, however, from time to time a gentler figure. Such was Charles Alexander, the grandfather of the Chancellor. His dream was the peaceful life of the diplomatist. But the inevitable cavalry service awaited him like the rest. While he was at work in the royal cabinet as an attaché of legation, Frederick II., finding him fine-looking and a proper man for horseback, gave him out of hand a cornet's brevet. Charles

Alexander, as soon as he could, took leave of the army in order to marry and live in his house at Schoenhausen. This sincere and passionate taste for retirement is another of the traits of the Bismarcks, which is possessed by the Chancellor in a very high degree. Charles Alexander wrote most agreeably in French, for in 1774, when the "Sorrows of Werther" had just appeared, the Bismarck of that time, like Frederick the Great, was still blind to the literary capabilities of his native language.

His son Ferdinand, the father of the Chancellor, married the daughter of Anastasius Menken, Privy Councillor, who was himself imbued with French ideas and a love for the French tongue. Biographers leave this last before the greatest of the Bismarcks a little in the shade. Ferdinand, however, sums up in himself those qualities of his race which shine so brightly in his son. A robust hunter and of vivacious temperament, he reached the age of seventy-four. His taste for retirement and domestic felicity made him leave the service at the age of twenty-five, with the rank of Rittmeister, to pass the rest of his life on his estates. His vocation was to be a carbineer; at twenty-five he already counted thirteen years' service in the cavalry, having entered the regiment when he was twelve, as a volunteer. At that age he mounted guard, acted as sentinel, and took his turn at the stables like his comrades. Always bold in his decisions, he performed the most daring act of his race when, a burggrave of the old Marches and belonging to one of the six privileged dynasties of the country, he had the courage to marry a young girl full of soul and refinement, but of plebeian origin, brought up by her father in French principles. Imagine the Junkers of the old Marches, in 1805, receiving the news in the six castles of the Schlossgessene, "Ferdinand von Bismarck is going to bring here and present to us as his wife a young person born of a family of servants at Leipsic!" From this au-

dacious marriage was born the man who has recreated the German Empire.

Would it not seem that each of the forgotten or obscure Bismarcks whom we have passed in review has been, as it were, a molecule of the great Bismarck? Would it not seem as though there had been in them a foretelling of his exuberance, his iron will, the cool daring of his brain, his contempt for conventionalities, his genial and imaginative temperament, his dictatorial retirement at Varzin? Race and surroundings are not everything: they are

not the only governing and determining powers. There is in every individual a mystery which has never been explained, and that is the individual himself. But surroundings and race are undoubtedly forces. A great man is formed of the marrow of a series of men, each perhaps as happily gifted as himself, but with aptitudes that could only be carried to maturity and perfection by the long elaboration of time and the continued efforts of many generations.

G. VON STÄRKE.

A FRENCH VERSION OF "THE MERCHANT OF VENICE."

GERMAN scholars are wont to declare not only that Shakespeare is better understood and appreciated in the "Fatherland" than in his own country, but that to the labors of Lessing, Wieland, Herder, and Goethe it was mainly owing that the English people were at last awakened to a recognition of the genius of their greatest poet.

Extravagant as is this assertion in its entirety, it is not without a certain substratum of truth, for it must be conceded that during a long period the treatment of Shakespeare by his countrymen was such as at the present day seems almost incredible. For nearly a century after the Restoration scarcely an instance can be cited of any one of his plays being put upon the stage without having been first subjected to the most absurd and indefensible alterations. Dryden, Cibber, and a host of minor dramatists tried their hands at improving (!) both the tragedies and the comedies, but more especially the former. The pretext almost invariably put forward by each successive mutilator of the bard was that the cultivated taste of the public of a later time could not be expected to derive entertainment from the ill-con-

structed plots and rude, unpolished language of the author. In an age when the gross immorality of Wycherly and Congreve was not only tolerated, but applauded, it is not a little curious to find the greatest of poets accused of lacking refinement and culture. Even at a later period, Goldsmith only expressed a sentiment very generally entertained in his day when, in the "Vicar of Wakefield," he represents Dr. Primrose, on being informed that Shakespeare's plays are being performed more frequently than formerly, as exclaiming, "How! is it possible that the present age can be pleased with that antiquated dialogue, that obsolete humor, those overcharged characters, which abound in the works you mention?"

A few instances will suffice to illustrate the ruthless manner in which the playwrights of the eighteenth century dealt with those of Shakespeare's dramas which they took in hand. In one adaptation of "The Tempest" (there have been several) Miranda was provided with a sister, and that sister had, equally with herself, a lover, which necessarily involved not only the reconstruction of the plot and incidents of

the piece, but the introduction of a large amount of extraneous matter, as dialogue had to be written for the additional characters. In "Lear" the Fool disappeared altogether from the stage; neither the King nor Cordelia died, and the latter married Kent. In "Romeo and Juliet" Romeo returned to Mantua in time to rescue his wife, and the play ended happily. As regards "Twelfth Night" and other of the comedies, whole scenes were cut out, and others, the work of the adapters, interpolated, with the result that, as Sheridan said of Cumberland's plagiarisms, "Their imitations of Shakespeare resemble the mimicry of Falstaff's page, and are about as near the standard of the original."

If in his native land Shakespeare experienced the treatment I have described, it is scarcely to be wondered at that he fared still worse at the hands of playwrights on the other side of the Channel. Indeed, such of the adaptations of his plays as have been produced on the French stage have, as a rule, in plot, incident, and dialogue, deviated more widely from the original than those of any English dramatist. Of all these perversions the most curious is, I think, a version of the "Merchant of Venice," entitled "*Le Juif de Venise*," the performance of which I witnessed a few years ago at the *Ambigu Comique*. The drama is in five, or rather six, acts—the prologue constituting one—and seven *tableaux*. In the prologue the stage is divided into two parts: on the left is shown the interior of Sheeloque's residence; on the right is a "practicable" canal. Two Venetian nobles, Leone and Uberto, land from a gondola and enter the house. Sheeloque comes forward to greet them, and they at once proceed to business. He holds, it appears, a bill of theirs which is due that very day, and, being unable to meet it, they want it "renewed,"—phraseology which, it may be observed *en passant*, savors rather of the nineteenth than the fifteenth century. Sheeloque refuses to comply with their request, and insists upon having the money, whereupon the two nobles wax wroth, and intimate

their intention of paying him with blows instead of ducats,—a mode of cancelling their pecuniary obligations to which their creditor, not unnaturally, very decidedly objects. The dialogue at this point has a faint suggestion of that scene in the original between Shylock and Antonio in which the former says,—

You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to, then; you come to me and you say,
"Shylock, we would have monies." You say so;
You that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold.

For Sheeloque, warming with a sense of injury, exclaims, addressing Uberto, "But yesterday, only yesterday, thou didst bid thy mistress mock me from her balcony, thy servitors at thy command cast mud upon me, and thy hounds sped snapping at my heels." He concludes his speech with the somewhat curious threat that if the two nobles attempt to lay hands upon him he will "bite a piece out of them." To this Leone retorts that any Jew menacing a Christian is, by the laws of the State, liable to fine and imprisonment. Sheeloque nevertheless stands on his defence, for, like the member of the Grace Walking Brethren to whom Colonel Josiah Quag proposed to administer a beating, he prefers to "take it fighting instead of lying down." A brief encounter ensues, and Leone and Uberto, having got the worst of it, retire, telling Sheeloque that a severe punishment awaits him.

As soon as the Jew is alone, he summons his housekeeper Sarah, who enters, carrying his baby in her arms. Her master informs her of what has occurred, and adds that, in anticipation of his arrest, which will not, he fears, be long delayed, he must at once visit some members of his tribe for the purpose of arranging his business-affairs. Here comes in a little bit of Shakespeare, for the language in which Sheeloque expresses his doubts as to the safety of his house during his absence

is only a free translation of the Jew's speech to Jessica when leaving home to sup with Antonio and his friends. Having first offered up a prayer for the welfare of his infant son, Sheeloque starts on his mission.

Sarah supposes herself to be a widow: her husband deserted her many years ago; she has heard nothing of him since, and believes him to be dead. As, according to her account, he was a "villain of the deepest dye," a "man unspeakable," etc., she is not inconsolable for his loss. Scarcely has she communicated these details to the audience, when a gondola rows up to the house, and the very individual of whom she has just given so unflattering a description lands from it. He informs his dismayed wife that, after encountering various vicissitudes of fortune, he has turned his attention to piracy, which he finds a decidedly hazardous and not particularly lucrative profession. Indeed, he candidly admits that there exists so strong a prejudice in the community against gentlemen who devote themselves to such "irregular adventures" as robbery and murder on the high seas, that if he fell into the hands of the Venetian authorities his shrift would be a short one. His life being forfeit to the law, he is not disposed to be nice about trifles, and his business is briefly this. His captain has lost a son; a child is required to supply his place. Sheeloque's boy will answer the purpose admirably, and he (the speaker) has come to carry him off, although how, until he entered the house, he was aware of the existence of the infant does not very clearly appear.

To this abominable proposition Sarah, of course, will not for one moment listen, and when her husband seizes the baby she shrieks loudly for assistance. He promptly silences her with a thrust of his dagger, and then hastily departs, carrying the child with him.

Then comes a really good scene. Sheeloque returns, finds his son gone and Sarah lying dead upon the ground. Whilst, horror-stricken at the spectacle, he kneels beside the body of

the unfortunate woman to ascertain if life be quite extinct, a posse of the *shirri* enter to arrest him for the assault upon Leone and Uberto. He is at once accused of the murder of his housekeeper, and at first is stunned by the charge. But his eye suddenly lights upon the weapon, dropped by the assassin in his flight, with which the crime was committed. Hastily snatching it up, he points to the handle. "Doth a Jew carry a knife with a *cross* upon it?" he demands. "Go to! the murderer is a Christian!" To this the captain of the guard has nothing to say, except that the question of Sheeloque's guilt or innocence must be decided elsewhere, and that in the mean time he must go to prison, to which he is accordingly hurried off. So ends the prologue.

When the curtain rises on Act I., twenty years are supposed to have elapsed. In the drama Bassanio becomes Honori-
us, and Antonio, Andronic. Portia, one of the noblest creations of Shakespeare, for some occult reason has no place in the play, but for her is substituted Imperia, who, to employ Thackeray's euphemism, "belongs to that class of women whose society young Marlow frequented before he became acquainted with Miss Hardcastle." She is, in fact, a very naughty personage indeed; and to the baleful influence she exercises over Honori-
us are to be attributed those serious complications which arise in the course of the drama. Honori-
us and Andronic, who are both young men, are bosom friends. They have only recently come to Venice from Smyrna, where the latter has acquired a considerable fortune as a merchant. Honori-
us is poor,—a spendthrift, a gambler, a libertine,—and his only redeeming virtue is that he makes no pretence to be better than he really is, but frankly admits that he is a thorough *vaurien*. Andronic, on the contrary, is not only rich, but the most moral of men, and he makes strenuous but ineffectual efforts to wean his companion from his vicious course of life.

Several young Venetians come on the

stage, accompanied by Imperia. Sheeloque, whose hair is now dashed with gray, enters shortly afterward, in search of Honorius, who is largely in his debt. He mentions incidentally that, although the charge of murder broke down, he yet suffered an imprisonment of two years for the "little unpleasantness" with Leone and Uberto. "But," he adds, "a just Doge now rules in Venice." This statement has an important bearing upon after-events, since it is the conviction the Jew entertains that the law will now be administered without respect to persons which causes him, when subsequently entering into the agreement with Andronic with regard to the pound of flesh, to feel confident that if his debtor make default in the payment of the money he will be permitted to enforce the penal clause of the contract. Imperia indulges in some decidedly uncomplimentary remarks about Sheeloque, whereupon he gravely goes up to her and salutes her as "sister." She demands an explanation, which he gives, to the effect that "*she* is Luxury and *he* Usury, and they both have one father." "Queer old man!" says Imperia, but she does not venture upon any further jests at his expense. Then follows a game of dice, and Honorius is a heavy loser. He is arrested at the suit of the Jew, and is being carried off to prison, when his creditor offers to stake two thousand ducats against his life. Honorius has just accepted the proposition, when Andronic enters and insists upon paying the debt.

In Act II., Andronic implores Honorius to "fly that creature" who is ruining him; but the latter, although he admits and deplores his infatuation for Imperia, has not the resolution to follow his friend's salutary counsel. At this juncture on comes the Doge, who makes a long speech about the desperate condition of affairs in Venice. Twelve ships and twenty galleys have been lost in the Black Sea, and the armies of the Republic have been routed by the Dalmatians under the walls of Zara. The treasury, too, is empty, and a loan is urgently required. To this hint An-

dronic replies that his "whole fortune is embarked in foreign ventures, and that until some of his ships arrive in port he will not have at his command the means of affording the assistance asked for,"—which speech bears considerable resemblance to that passage in Shakespeare where Antonio says to Bassanio,—

Thou knowest that all my fortunes are at sea,
Nor have I money nor commodity
To raise a present sum.

Then the Doge applies to Sheeloque, who proceeds to drive a very hard bargain, for he requires that there shall be deposited with him, as security for the loan, not only the state jewels, but those also of the Doge's daughter Ginivra. No sooner is her name mentioned than she enters, casket in hand, so promptly as almost to induce the suspicion that she has been listening outside. This estimable young woman surrenders the contents of her jewel-case without a murmur. But, not satisfied with this, the Jew insists upon having likewise the necklace she is wearing. Now, this ornament has belonged to Ginivra's mother; and here is afforded an opportunity for that appeal to the filial affection of Frenchmen which is never made in vain. It is really a noble trait in the national character, and on the stage any reference to *ma mère* is sure of touching a sympathetic chord in the audience. Ginivra hesitates at first to part with her dead mother's gift, but finally patriotism triumphs, and the necklace also is handed to Sheeloque, who goes out promising to send the money to the Doge on the following day.

In Act III., Andronic, who is in love with Ginivra, goes to Sheeloque to redeem the necklace. He has not the present means of doing so, some of his ships having been lost at sea; but three galleons, richly freighted, are due at Venice in a few weeks' time, and then he will be able to repay the money he is desirous of borrowing. Here, of course, the occasion presents itself for the Jew to gratify, in the person of Andronic, his long-cherished hatred of the whole Christian race. He proposes, therefore, as in the original, the insertion in the contract

of the clause with respect to a pound of flesh to be claimed by him in the event of his debtor being unable to meet his engagements. The merchant agrees to the conditions, and the bond is duly signed, sealed, and delivered.

Act IV.—Imperia has heard of the necklace, and she insists upon Honorius obtaining it for her, which—as he has recently been lucky at the gaming-table—he is in a position to do. He accordingly visits Sheeloke for that purpose, but learns from him that the ornament in question is no longer in his possession, he having parted with it to Andronic. Honorius then seeks his friend, and asks, or rather demands, that the necklace shall be handed over to him. To this modest proposition Andronic refuses to accede, and with considerable indignation when he learns that the jewels are wanted for "that woman." A quarrel ensues, swords are drawn, and, after a brief encounter, Honorius is disarmed. Then, repentant of his late outburst, he asks pardon of his friend for the base ingratitude with which he has repaid the many obligations he is under to him; and, after embracing Andronic, who at once forgives him, he declares that he will join the expedition fitting out against the Adriatic pirates, in the hope that by the services rendered to his country he may atone for his former excesses and wipe out the stain which rests upon his honor.

Act V.—Andronic's ships have arrived in port, but empty, having been plundered by the very pirates Honorius has gone to fight. The unfortunate merchant is bankrupt, ruined, and there is no remedy but that he must pay the forfeit nominated in the bond. As the populace manifest a disposition not to permit this to be done, Andronic, with an exaggerated, not to say quixotic, sense of honor, demands that a guard of soldiers shall accompany him to the Doge's palace to prevent a rescue and to protect Sheeloke in the enforcement of his rights. Some of the incidents that follow closely resemble those of the original. The Jew insists upon the strict letter of his bond, will not listen to any

pleas for mercy, and eagerly whets his knife in anticipation of his coming vengeance. Andronic has already bared his bosom for the stroke, when Honorius enters. The Adriatic expedition has been successful; the cargoes of which the galleons were plundered have been recaptured, and he himself has in single combat vanquished the pirate chief, Arneheim, who turns out to be no other than Sarah's husband. This highly estimable individual, when dying, has intrusted to Honorius a paper proving that Andronic is the son who in infancy was stolen from Sheeloke. The document is duly handed to the Jew, who is completely overwhelmed by the discovery that the man whose life he has so vindictively sought is his own son.

At this juncture all the characters come on the stage, and then follows what is, it must be admitted, a finely-conceived scene. Sheeloke would claim his son, but he reflects that to do so would be to brand him as one of a despised race, and he refrains. There is something extremely beautiful in making the Jew yield up his wealth to Andronic, saying that he "will wander far from Venice, his staff his only support;" and when, too, as he stoops to kiss the hand of his son,—whom he dare not embrace,—Ginivra indulges in a gesture of mingled apprehension and repulsion, the words in which he repels the suspicion that he would injure him are dignified and pathetic. And with this the play ends.

The drama possesses, undoubtedly, considerable merit, but Shakespeare's share in it bears about the same proportion to that of the adapter that Falstaff's pennyworth of bread did to his gallon of sack; and the question naturally suggests itself, why did the French dramatist, if he deemed it advisable to borrow anything, borrow so little? and, above all, why, in casting about for a subject, did he select one of the finest creations of the greatest poet of all time for so curious a metamorphosis as is "Le Juif de Venise" of the "Merchant of Venice"? W. C. M.

A HAPPENING IN THE WINTER MOUNTAINS.

A MOST fortunate accident led me to spend two weeks at a farmhouse in the midst of the White Mountains in the very heart of winter. It was as pleasantly bestowed an old domicile as one could possibly wish,—high on the mountain-side, with a tangle of apple-boughs on the steep ascent which sheltered its back, and its face toward a broad, deep valley, over which towered innumerable peaks, some transparent as clouds in the hazy distance, others so near that you could almost count the icicles on their craggy shoulders. What the sunrise and the sunset were amid those snow-covered mountains it is impossible to describe. They were not like mere pictures of changeful, radiant color: they thrilled one like music; and long after the moon had poised itself over the purple peaks and the stars were holding their lamps over the dim, mysterious gorges one heard their harmonies still surging in one's ears.

The immediate surroundings, as well as the interior of the farm-house, reminded one of farmsteads in Norwegian stories, everything was so primitive and pastoral, so rude and yet so suggestive of peace and plenty. One of the great barns was crowded with woolly sheep, and the sweet breath of cattle was wafted from its warm, straw-lined stalls. Others were overflowing with grain, great bins full of yellow corn, and piles of fragrant hay. An ice-bound bucket clattered down into an old moss-lined well under the apple-boughs and brought up the sweetest and most sparkling water. One was roused in the morning by the crowing of the cocks, the red light of a lantern flashing on the wall, and the creaking of footsteps and milk-pails under the frosted windows.

The interior of the house was rich in high-piled feather beds, soft, woolly blankets, hooked rugs, and rag carpets. In one corner of the great low-ceiled kitchen Grandma Winslow, a bright-

eyed dame of seventy-three, with hair as white as the fleecy rolls which she spun, plied her spinning-wheel from dawn until dusk, a genuine old-time affair, like the one lodged in the Plymouth treasure-house. Her son, the master of the house, who, as he expressed it, was "pestered with rheumatics," dozed in another corner over the "Farmers' Almanac." His wife, whose shoulders were bowed by hard work, but who was still brisk and alert, pattered about in cloth slippers from dairy to pantry until the dinner-things were "cleared away," when she and her daughters retired for a brief rest.

The girls, Phebe and Joe, were both buxom and pretty, each owning a bewitching dimple in her chin and a beau; and the amount of house-work which they accomplished, to say nothing of log-cabin quilts and crazy cushions, was something remarkable.

But Charlie, the only son of the house, seemed to be the most important member of the family. He was a tall, handsome young man of twenty-seven. He had broad shoulders, a well-moulded head, which he carried with a sort of manly pride, and an open and honest countenance. There was both force and sweetness in the glance of his dark eyes, and his brown skin was capable of flushing like a girl's. But his mouth closed a trifle too closely over the strong, white teeth, and there was an expression of firmness which amounted almost to obstinacy about his clear-cut, smoothly-shaven chin.

"Charlie is a good boy," grandma, who was very communicative, said to me on the day of my arrival. "Smart, too. It's amazin' how he's brought up the farm these three or four years past. Joel was lettin' it kinder run down, on account of his rheumatics; but Charlie's been 'n' got new stock, all of the very best kind. The meadders, that didn't grow much besides white-weed 'n' but-

tercups, looked splendid last summer; and such a crop of grain as was raised in the back fields ain't never been heard of in this part of the country. He's taken ter raisin' colts, too,—'n' they all turn out amazin' likely. Why, it seems as if everything he touched turned ter money; 'n' he's proper generous 'n' kind with his money,—never goes down country without rememberin' ter buy something real nice 'n' pretty for grandma as well as for the other folks. But I tell you what, Charlie does like ter hev his own way too dretful well; thet's his failin'. You might ez well try ter drive a wooden stake inter that passil o' granite over on Mount Washington as ter try ter drive new convictions into his head when he's once got sot on his own. He's been an' hed a quarrel with the gal he's been sparkin' fur a year or two back, now; 'n' I shouldn't wonder ef he wuz pretty much ter blame himself,—though she may be kinder flighty. It's Minty Crowell,—Cyrus Crowell's daughter, thet lives over ter the crick,—'n' he imagines she's dretful took up with the new minister 'n' hez been a-flirtin' with him on the sly. 'N' mebbe she hez,—fur unmarried ministers seem ter be amazin' enticin' ter wimmen-folks gin'rally. Ef I hed my way, not one of 'em should ever be sot over a parish till he hed a wife. How ken a man thet all the girls in the town is makin' eyes at git up a proper sperit fur an awakenin', or ever be speritoocally edefyin', with his mind took up with love-affairs? Sech actions don't seem a mite like Minty, though. I know her folks root 'n' branch, 'n' there ain't no better nor honest folk in the world; forehanded, too. And Minty, though she keeps school summer 'n' winter,—she keeps right over here in the White deestric't this winter,—is a real good housekeeper, 'n' ez fur butter-'n' cheese-makin', is equil to her mother,—'n' everybody knows what Mis' Lizy Crowell's cheeses air. She's pretty high-sperited, but I don't b'lieve she'd ever git so upshot in rightmindedness ez ter keep two beaux on her string at the same time. Enyhow, Charlie is real

miser'ble 'n' low-sperited, though he won't let on nothin' about it ter nobody. Why, he ain't himself no more'n nothin' at all. He use' ter be always a-laughin' 'n' crackin' his jokes,—it would 'a' done you good ter see his pleasant countenance; but now he's so sober he looks almost humbly, I declare. Marthy 'n' the girls is dretful put out about the goin's on, fur they like Minty fast-rate; but 'tain't no use ter say nothin'. They say he's been a-goin' over ter see Arcilly Long lately. Thet's only jest ter pay Minty off fur walkin' out with the minister, I guess, fur Arcilly hain't half so pretty appearin', 'n' she don't come of nigh so good stock ez Minty does."

Charlie certainly was somewhat downcast in his appearance. He rarely spoke or smiled, and if he occupied a seat in the family sitting-room of an evening he seemed not to hear the jokes or the music or the laughter ringing about him, but sat with his head on his breast and his eyes moodily fixed on the fire. I could see that his mother watched him somewhat anxiously, and his sisters seemed half vexed that he should bring so clouded a countenance into the midst of the festivities. During the day, unless it was fiercely stormy, he was occupied in hauling wood from what was called the timber-lot, a dense piece of pine-wood several miles distant, where he had a gang of choppers at work. But whenever he was about the house, if there was anything which his mother or the girls wished to have done, if he could be of any assistance to them in the churning or the placing of the milk-pans or the building of fires, he was always ready and alert. He also seemed tenderly mindful of his father's "rheumatics." He carefully filled his pipe for him three times a day, and, whenever he rose from his chair, sprang at once to his aid. It was evident that he was a good and dutiful son as well as a kind and thoughtful brother, and it seemed a great pity that the course of true love should not run more smoothly for so worthy a youth.

Winter-life in a mountain farm-house, so far away from the "madding crowd,"

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is by no means so dull and monotonous as one might imagine it to be. The snow brings with it fresh life and activity. The woods ring with the blithe sound of the axe. Sledges with tinkling bells, drawn by great dappled oxen, come from the villages below. Pungs, laden with supplies, go whisking toward the woods. Huge old-fashioned sleighs, bearing neighbors who live sometimes as many as seventeen miles distant, stop almost daily at the gate, and the happenings which have been accumulating for a whole year in the region round about are discussed with great zest and enjoyment over hospitable mugs of hot cider. At other seasons, not only the press of farm-work, but the bad roads, the almost impossible travelling in some localities, keeps these neighbors apart; but when the snow falls, the deep ruts and jagged hollows and rolling stones are all filled and smoothly covered, and the laziest and most jaded old farm-horse is coaxed into something like briskness, as his heavy loads slip after him over the well-trodden tracks.

For the Winslows, every evening was filled with festivities of some sort. One evening in the week was devoted to the singing-school, which was kept "down mounting" by a man that lived over Ossipee way; another to a spelling-match, held in the school-house of Flint Mountain "deestric," and largely attended by both young and old from miles around. The prayer-meetings, which occurred "down mounting," on Friday nights, could hardly come under the head of festivities, but the farm-house folk set out for the "meetin'-house" with such an air of hilarity, and talked of the occasion so much as if it were an affair of high holiday, that I came to regard it as such, as a matter of course. On stay-at-home evenings there was always company at the farm-house. On moonlight nights the school-master from "down mounting" appeared, bringing his flute and a down-cast countenance with him, for Joe was a great tease, and, having become enslaved by her charms, he bore snubbing and humiliation bravely, but was unable

to maintain an heroic air under his trials. Then there was Sam Griffin, the nearest neighbor "across lots," a young farmer, who was "just commencin'" to go with Phebe," as I was informed by grandma, and, with all the zeal of new-born affection, came, in spite of snow-fall or tempest, as soon as the sheep were folded and the cattle milked and fed for the night.

Old Saul Rogers, a merry hermit, who lived in a little hut on the borders of Dark Pond, and played on the violin with a jollity which set the soberest feet to tripping, and predicted the weather with an air of solemn wisdom, was another guest rarely absent from the circle. Sometimes before supper was over his brisk tread and merry whistle would be heard outside, and, entering the house without the ceremony of knocking, and as often without any greeting whatever to its inmates as otherwise, he would seat himself by the kitchen fire and enjoy a good smoke and a season of deep and apparently happy meditation with Ezra the hired man. When the smoke was over, he would bring his violin into the sitting-room, where he listened impatiently to the pleading tenderness of the school-master's flute, and, whenever they attempted to play a duet, would drown its liquid notes by the most reckless scrapings and trillings. A flute he considered "dretful poor music: it sounded with the fiddle like a kinder trembly old woman's voice a-singin' what folks used ter call counter." Various other neighbors were sure to drop in in the course of the evening. The fire roared in the chimney, warming its great black throat with a scarlet radiance, and tossing fantastic beams on the wall and the low, somewhat dingy ceiling. The spicy scent of cider filled the whole room with a sense of cheer, and great hilarity prevailed till half-past nine o'clock, when it suddenly ceased, and all, with the exception of Sam Griffin and the school-master, who remained somewhat later, took a hurried departure. Bedroom-candles were lighted, and only the two girls remained to entertain their lovers.

One couple retired to the cheerful neighborhood of the kitchen stove, while the other more fortunate pair enjoyed their short season of sentiment by the poetic ruins of the chimney-logs. But, though the evenings were so overflowing with music and sociability, I enjoyed the daytime, which I spent out in the open air, with far more zest. I rose by candle-light every morning. The stars were still burning over the white mountain-peaks, and gleamed brightly through the silver frost-sprays on the window-pane. The cattle were lowing, the sheep bleating for their breakfast, and an echo, hidden somewhere in the rocky ascent at the back of the house, repeated these sounds and that of the cock-crowing with a sweetness and clearness which were like enchantment. They were rude noises enough, but the echo made them music.

I opened my window into the cheery morning atmosphere, and smelled the fresh, pure scent of the snow, and breathed the sweet tingling air,—when the thermometer was below zero there was a sort of balm in its blowing, quite unlike the bitter blast which sweeps along the coast,—and then ran down to breakfast, with the unreasoning joy and light-heartedness which one sometimes feels in breezy spring weather. We ate three kinds of cake, sausages, and mince-pie, by the light of the fitful kerosene, —or at least all these articles of food were on our bill of fare. Then came the sunrise, creeping rosilily from peak to peak, trailing down the sparkling snow-fields, breathing the tenderest pink and crimson hazes over the valley, till the sun itself, a great bunch of golden sheaves with a heart of scarlet fire, blazed over Sunrise Hill and deluged the whole world with splendor.

One longed to be out of doors in the midst of all this brightness, and every pleasant morning, no matter how frosty the air, I set out on an expedition over the snowy hills and fields, sometimes drawn by Dolly, the lazy old family-horse, in an antiquated high-backed sleigh, and sometimes on foot. Sometimes, on a small

sled, steered by either Joe or Phebe, at the risk of life and limb, I made a breathless descent of the "mounting," not coming to a full stop until I reached the village, a distance of nearly two miles. One morning Joe and I went to the woods with Charlie, seated comfortably under a pile of buffalo robes, on the creaking old ox sled. It was still dark when we started, being only six o'clock, and a lighted lantern hung from one of the stakes, but, when we reached the entrance to the woods, day had taken full possession of the world. The air was so clear that we saw quite distinctly one of the "signal-men," like a black speck, moving on the side of Mount Washington. A great eagle fluttered over the "giant's stairway." The dark tops of the pine-trees were etched against the perfect azure of the sky. In the woods the air was soft and fragrant. The snow under foot was printed with innumerable bird-tracks. The ring of distant axes was like music, and all the sleepy gods in the old hills, near and far, repeated the strokes with their fine, faint voices. The lumbering camp, built of old lichen-covered logs, and glowing with rosy firelight through every chink, made a warm bit of color in a little white clearing. Its presiding genius, the cook, was absent, but we sat down on the "deacon-seat" and enjoyed the great blaze after our long, cold ride.

Another morning we started on a twenty-mile sleighing-party, taking our dinner at a country hotel, and reaching home just as the moon poised her silver shield over the brow of Brier Hill. When the wind was driving great waves of frosted snow into the cracks and crannies of the doors and windows, the fireside was cosy enough, the music of grandma's spinning-wheel delightfully drowsy and soothing, and the handsome old dame herself a picture well worth looking at, as with head proudly erect and stately tread she moved to and fro with the motion of her wheel. But the faces of the mountains were obliterated, and one missed the frosty wine of the mountain-air, which not only acted like a charm

on the spirits, but seemed to lend wings to the body as well.

"You must stay ter the sociable, Miss Smith," said Mrs. Winslow to me one day, when it was nearly time for my visit to be over. "We can't hev it before a week from ter-day, fur the moon won't be right till then, 'n' folks can't git down mounting very well, even when 'tis smooth sleighin', you know, without moonlight. A lahnter's no more'n a lightnin'-bug in all out-door. Once a year we always hev it up here, 'n' it has ter be in the winter-time, when travellin's easy, of course. Ezzy's a-goin' round ter give the folks notice of it day after ter-morrer. I'd like ter hev it give out in meetin' Sunday, but we was afraid twa'n't a solemn kind of a party enough fur that. You see, when we hev it we make more'n a meetin'-folks or deestric-sociable out of it, 'n' invite all the folks we know that live nigh enough ter come, 'n' all his 'n' my folks that live over Ossipee way 'n' round. They don't think nothin' o' comin' twenty miles to it, so we do cook up pretty well. Now we've got a young minister that don't seem ter hev no ill will ter fun, we may clear the kitchen 'n' hev a little darnse." I had intended to leave the "mounting" on Monday, but could not resist the temptation to remain three days longer, and join in the festivities of the sociable.

A great bustle of preparation lasted through the entire week. Egg-beaters were whisked, oven doors rattled, the chopping-knife rang from dawn until bedtime; even grandma left her spinning-wheel, and stoned raisins or helped to cut great yellow pumpkins and slim, crook-neck squashes, which delectable vegetables were to be made into the creamiest and spiciest of pies. Joe drove eight miles, in the teeth of as bitter a wind as ever blew, to obtain a new recipe for making cookies, and Ezra was sent twelve miles to borrow some glass sauce-plates of an asthmatic old aunt who could not come to the party.

"Marthy and the girls is dretful anxious ter bring Charlie 'n' Minty ter-

gether ag'in the night o' the sociable," grandma confided to me. "You couldn't git Minty to the house any other way, of course; but nobody under the sun would stay away from the sociable ef she could help it. Charlie'll hev ter be here whether er no, too. They say they ain't even spoke lately, but Charlie seems ter grow more 'n' more miser'ble, 'n' I ruther guess he'll be pooty glad to come round by this time, though he is sot, sot as a granite ledge. He's been in a kinder brown study for a day or two past. Last night I spoke ter him twice afore he heard me, 'n' then he started ez ef he'd been shot."

The eventful day finally dawned, highly favored by the weather, to the great relief of the family, who had been consulting the almanac and the signs pertaining to the chancies of the moon with the deepest anxiety for more than a week. The air was as warm and balmy as that of April. There was a musical sound of melting and trickling out under the tender blue sky; the frost melted off the window-pane, the great snow-drifts grew less every moment. It was a spring day lighting like a bluebird in the frosty beard of winter. No summer afternoon ever wrapped the mountains with such hazes of enchantment, such tints of rose and violet, or breathed into the valleys such soft blue shadows. No summer sunsets ever wrought such magic with the changeful splendor of their clouds over distant peaks and dark evergreen forests. The evening star rose in a band of deep crimson, and in its light the first guests came toiling "up mounting."

They were relations, who, living at a great distance, had come to tea, which occurred, as usual, at half-past five, and proposed to remain over-night. They brought with them a great many best caps and other articles of head-gear, in boxes, and an air of subdued hilarity.

"Now, don't eat too much, folks, so's not ter hev any appetite for the company-supper, for that's a-comin' off at eight er clock," remarked Mrs. Winslow, as we seated ourselves at the well-spread board.

"Lor', Marthy, I don't feel ez ef I could take anything but a cup o' tea," said an elderly aunt, who beamed with expectation. "Don't you feel dretful frustrated, too?"

Mrs. Winslow acknowledged that she did.

"I shan't take anything but tea. I'm in too much of a hurry to look round before the other folks get here. I declare! you've got fixed up real nice," said a younger woman, whose hair was parted so as to form a point in the middle of her head, which arrangement gave her a singular halved-and-quartered appearance.

And, indeed, the house had undergone a wonderful transformation. Company-tidies had been taken from their wrappings in bureau drawers and were fastened over chairs and lounges. The old-fashioned looking-glass in the best room was newly adorned with red, white, and blue tissue-paper. The sitting-room floor was entirely covered with holiday-rugs which shamed the rainbow in variegated brilliancy. The solemn old clock, that stood in the corner, was ornamented with gay paper ribbons, and various wonderful crazy cushions and lamp-mats were brought to light and dazzled in different directions.

By seven o'clock three large rooms were closely filled, to say nothing of an overflow of relations in the kitchen. I watched eagerly for Minty Crowell, and, as soon as she arrived, grandma, knowing that I was interested, came and pointed her out to me. She was very unlike the usual type of mountain-girl, being pale and *petite*, with pretty brown eyes and a full red mouth. Her nose had a somewhat saucy tilt, and her chin, like Charlie's, was somewhat firm in its setting, but her eyes were both honest and loving. They met your gaze confidently, like those of a child. As far as dress was concerned, she was greatly superior to the other maidens, wearing a black silk gown, which fitted her trim little figure smoothly, if not with great elegance, and a pink silk handkerchief loosely knotted about her throat.

"Don't you think that plaguesy Char-

lie ain't nowhere ter be found? The folks is terribly out about it, and Marthy says she won't eat her supper till he makes his appearance, ef tain't till ten o'clock. Ezy says some one see him drive off with Sam Hunt's team about half-past one in the afternoon. He ain't been here sence dinner, that's certain, 'n' the girls hev wanted his help pretty bad," whispered grandma, while I was stealing a good glance at Minty.

People from every quarter were beginning to inquire, "Where is Charlie?" But, receiving no satisfactory answer to this question, a buxom young cousin, who wore a blue-and-white plaid ribbon-sash over an extremely gay black-and-red gown, proposed a good game of blind-man's-buff. "We've got such a little while ter stay that we'd ought ter hev a good time every minute," said she. "Minty Crowell, I wish you'd go into the other room and stir up the young folks in there."

Minty Crowell started on being thus suddenly addressed. Her thoughts seemed to be absent. Her eyes kept wandering toward the door, as if she anxiously awaited some arrival. A bright red spot dawned in either cheek, and there was a strained, nervous look in her eyes. She "stirred up the folks" with zest, however, and the game was just commencing with great vim and jollity, when a bustle at the outer door attracted all eyes in that direction, and into the midst of the crowd walked Charlie, with a tall, broad-shouldered, blooming young woman on his arm. Minty, who had come to a sudden stand-still by the side of the minister, viewed the pair with dilated eyes and a look of almost horror in her face, and I could hear from every side subdued exclamations like these: "Lor' sakes, Arcilly Long!" "What upon earth!" "Well, this beats everything!"

Charlie was very pale, but he held his head proudly erect, and his eyes flashed like fire, while the young woman on his arm looked about her with a pleased, triumphant sort of titter.

"Neighbors and friends," said he, "allow me to introduce you to my wife.

Squire Trafton married us this afternoon over to the Corner."

For a moment there was a deep hush of amazement. Nobody stirred until Joe, who was extremely excitable, burst into tears and rushed out of the room. Minty leaned against the wall, and for one brief instant I feared that she was going to faint. Her face was deathly white, even to her lips, and there was a wan, pinched look about her mouth. But, to my great relief, the color flashed into her cheeks again, and in another moment she was talking and laughing with those around her. Indeed, I think she was the first one to break the silence after the appearance of the newly-wedded couple. It was evident that she was making a great effort, however, and I admired her greatly for her bravery.

The first shock of astonishment over, the people were not sparing with their hand-shakings and congratulations. Minty advanced toward the happy pair with the rest, and gave to each her slim little hand, though she did not speak. But there were no congratulations from the family. They had retired to the kitchen, and were holding a council of indignation. Joe and Phebe were both weeping violently. Mrs. Winslow and grandma were pale and trembling and talking in low but excited tones, while pa was hobbling to and fro, as he repeated over and over again, "Well, there! the boy must hev been took out of his senses!"

"Ter jilt Minty Crowell 'n' take up with Arcilly Long is like jiltin' a robin ter take up with a jackdaw. I declare! I don't b'lieve I can ever own him as a son ag'in, never!" said Mrs. Winslow, with a sort of gasp.

"Oh, yes, you will, ma: there ain't nothin' ter do but make the best of it. Minty she's a-settin' us a good example," pa remonstrated. And just at that moment the door opened, and Charlie appeared before them with his bride.

An unfortunate circumstance had made me an unwilling listener to a portion of the family council, but I took a

sudden flight at this period, and never knew what occurred at the meeting. But when, perhaps twenty minutes later, the happy pair returned to the scene of festivities, I could see no change in the countenance of either, only that the bride, who had removed her outside garments, disclosing an amazing amount of blonde lace and white ribbon, was more inclined to titter than ever.

The game of blind-man's-buff was progressing with renewed vim, and the minister, being the blind man, was pursuing Minty and another young woman into a corner, when a little cord which protruded from his vest-pocket caught upon a chair-post, and a locket which was attached to the string fell to the floor.

Charlie, who was standing near by, picked it up, and, holding it in his hand a moment, looked at the face which was set therein. The minister removed the bandage from his eyes and gazed about him.

"What right have you to carry that woman's face around with you?" said Charlie, with a hoarse laugh and a meaning glance at poor Minty.

"The best right in the world!" said the astonished young man, following Charlie's gaze toward the little school-mistress. "It is the face of the woman I am going to marry. I told Miss Crowell about her long ago."

"Good heavens, Minty! and you never told me of it!" he exclaimed eagerly, seizing both the girl's hands in his own, heedless of the crowd of gaping eyes and ears around them.

"You never gave me an opportunity to say anything about it," she faltered, struggling to free her hands from his grasp.

"And it's too late now! Oh, Minty, what have I done?"

Minty tottered toward the door. Mrs. Winslow threw her motherly arms about her and led her across the threshold, and in another moment she fell into a dead faint.

I hardly know how the sociable progressed after that. I only know that

the bride was not aware of what had happened, and that the minister was seized with an overwhelming enthusiasm for blind-man's-buff, and immediately readjusted the bandage over his eyes and kept the game spinning madly, until I heard some old ladies fearing, though they declared that they "hadn't no objections to a minister's hevin' a reasonable good time, that he hed too lively a disposition ever to be instrumental in savin' sinners."

I know that there was a great deal of hilarity and a great deal of sly gossip over the supper, and that the food was disappearing like magic,—huge slices of corned shoulder, scores of jellied tarts, and pumpkin-pies baked in long tin pans, plum-pudding, and pound-cake, and roast chicken, and strawberry preserves. I know that Minty, with scarlet cheeks and eyes feverishly bright, was assisting Phebe in pouring the coffee, and that Charlie, with a face which made no secret of his wretchedness, sat like a

statue beside his still simpering and unobserving bride.

The next morning I left the "mounting," and, though I heard frequently from both Phebe and Joe after my return home, Minty was never mentioned by them until the next year, when they wrote me that she was married to the new doctor, who had bought Squire Tracy's house, the finest one in the village, and seemed very happy, and that Charlie had refused to go to the wedding, though he sent her a splendid present.

Two years later, when I again visited the little mountain-nook, Minty was the first one I met on alighting from the stage.—gay and blooming and profusely adorned with pink ribbon. It was evident that no shadow from the past had left its trace on her light nature. But, when I looked into the altered and strangely-aged face of Charlie, I knew that he never would forget.

SUSAN HARTLEY.

HOUSEKEEPING IN A FRENCH-CANADIAN TOWN.

IT was on a March day that we three, Hortense, Roger, and I, first made acquaintance with St. François, and our earliest impressions of it were anything but pleasing. The place wore the aspect of midwinter. The snow lay deep on the ground and on the roofs; the long icicles pendent from the eaves sparkled dismally in the sunlight; the houses, whether the square, comfortable brick structure of the well-to-do citizen or the tumble-down dwelling of the *habitant*, were crowded close on the sidewalks, with scarcely a foot of space between their steps and the icy path, and, being clad in winter attire of double windows, appeared to wink and blink at us like a company of persons whom nature had neglected to provide with eyelids. The few sleighs which drove along the

streets were low and queer, and the people in them were swathed in wrappings till they looked like so many shapeless bundles of fur. The only thing pleasant to the eye was the flowers which were blossoming in every window and showed through the glass in even the poorest houses a mass of vivid color, from the scarlet of geraniums to the pale yellow of the tea-rose and the white of the calla. Everybody in St. François has flowers in winter. By what magic such a profusion of bloom is produced I know not, but there it is, a bright spot in the gloom and monotony of the long winter.

We had not been many days in the place before we discovered that it is a mongrel among towns. It is old, but such of its ancient buildings as remain have all of the decrepitude and none of

the dignity of age. Its historical honors—for its founding dates well back in Canadian history—have sunk into the grime and smoke of a small manufacturing town which has not even the counterbalancing picturesqueness of being in the heart of French Canada: it is rather on its outskirts, where the overflow from the sturdy, ever-increasing French population is encroaching upon the English settlements, where Catholic churches are springing up and French is spoken freely in places in which it was almost an unknown tongue ten years ago. The town stands not many miles from the line which separates Canada from the States, and three railways and a canal connect its tiny proportions with the outer world, but the current of life flows sluggishly in its veins. It bears far more resemblance to a foreign than to an American village. French is the language that one hears oftenest on the streets,—a French descending rapidly, according to the education of the speaker, from phrases which bear a clear resemblance to Parisian speech, to a *patois* unintelligible except to those who make a special study of it.

Strange and foreign are the ways of the people, too. We had our first experience of their ideas in a talk with a carpet-sewer, a plump, middle-aged woman, with a rigid cast of countenance, a house as neat as wax, and manners as starched as her curtains. Could she come and make our carpets?

Certainly she could, and would.

"And when?" we demanded.

"When?" She paused to reflect.

"In about a fortnight."

"Oh, can you not come in the course of the week?" cried Hortense. "Surely you cannot have such pressing work for a fortnight?"

Thereupon my lady tranquilly explained the situation. She had not had any work for a long time, and did not expect any except ours; but in less than a fortnight she would not work, because her daughter was coming with her grandchildren to pay her a visit, and she had resolved to have a holiday while they stayed.

She did not get our work when her visitors went away, for, failing to find other help, we sewed the carpets ourselves, with the assistance of a Frenchman who cut and fitted them. This man combined in his single person the functions of paper-hanger, furniture-maker, and undertaker for the flourishing town of St. François. The last of these vocations he must have selected out of regard to his complexion. Nature had certainly patterned him for a mourner, for the crape draperies were becoming to his large, lustrous eyes, which always appeared to be shining with unshed tears, his black hair and whiskers, and his pale, clear skin. He made a fine and most imposing figure as he walked through the streets at the head of the funeral train. But in private life he was one of the sunniest, cheeriest souls imaginable.

Even he, however, took a gloomy view of the servant-question. Hortense had always heard that the French-Canadian girls were such excellent servants, and so cheap, and her housewifely soul foresaw a small domestic paradise; but as soon as we made inquiries we found disenchantment. The same story met us on every hand. Servants were hard to get, and often worthless when obtained. Wages, which used to be three or four dollars a month, had now risen to six, eight, and ten, and yet the capable girls all went to the States, where they could command better pay. While we waited for a servant we had a long and varying succession of charwomen; but at last a middle-aged Englishwoman, Clara Carter by name, engaged to do our work. She was rather a depressing person to have about. She suffered greatly from the toothache, and to prevent the air from getting into her mouth she seldom spoke of her own accord, and answered all questions by a nod or a shake of the head. She used to bandage her jaws in white bandages, and, as she had a cadaverous complexion and a tall, thin figure, and wore felt slippers in which her step was noiseless, she was a tolerably corpse-like apparition when she suddenly appeared on

the threshold of the room where we were sitting. According to Clara's statement, she had spent the greater part of her life in the hospital. Ironing hurt her wrist; going up-stairs hurt her back; she protested against washing; and she could not scrub, because it gave her the rheumatism. She was near-sighted and she had weak ankles, a combination of infirmities which interfered with her success as a waitress, because whenever she had a tray of dishes in her hand she had an unpleasant habit of stumbling and sinking to her knees, so that one momentarily expected to see her go headlong and hear the crash of broken crockery. The crash never came; but it required a considerable stock of philosophy to sit quietly at the table and wait for it. Truth compels me to state, however, that Clara's infirmities never interfered with her visits to her friends. To go around the corner for the milk hurt her back, but she would trip off cheerfully a couple of miles into the country to see her cousin without any trouble whatever. The chief thing she did while with us was to drink herb-tea, which she brewed in large quantities, and whose smell scented the house and carried a suggestion of Satanic decoctions and witches' incantations. She was always ready to shake the stove, too,—for she was a cold body,—and, notwithstanding her many weaknesses, she shook it with a vigor that made the sound audible from garret to cellar, and the iron positively groaned and creaked under her rough handling.

Her successor was a blooming young English girl of seventeen, Delia by name, whose shoulders were broad and whose muscles were strong, and who certainly had the sweetest temper I have ever seen in a human being. It was altogether too sweet,—that was the trouble with her. One might as well have tried to make a permanent dent in a rubber ball as to produce any lasting impression upon Delia's disposition. When she was not watched, she had a weakness for putting away the pots and kettles dirty, and, being detected, would wash one after another, as they were presented to her, with

the utmost philosophy and good nature. Indeed, I am sorry to say that Delia, notwithstanding her pink cheeks and the general neatness of her personal appearance, was a slattern of the first order. And how she loved to gad about! She would take three hours to go a block to buy a knitting-needle, and then come back without the needle, after all, or set out on a half-hour's errand in the middle of the afternoon and return smiling at ten o'clock at night. Her mother was a Cockney born and bred, and she had caught from her the trick of dropping her *h*'s. "Am and heggs," and similar eccentricities of expression, became familiar in the household phraseology: indeed, it was not long before we discovered that the habit was catching and that we were taking it up ourselves. Then it ceased to be so amusing; but for a while the comicalness of Delia's talk atoned a little for her shortcomings. She was a great flirt, and, as summer drew on and we could fling the doors and windows open, she used every evening to have a half-dozen of the factory-boys hanging around the back gate, over which she leaned, making really a very pretty picture with her curls and her muslins just visible in the twilight, while she carried on a coquettish conversation with her loutish admirers. At last we took courage, dismissed Miss Delia, much to her surprise, and, not finding another servant, undertook the housework ourselves. From that time forth we had domestic peace.

All through the early and late spring we had thought St. François irredeemably ugly, but in June it suddenly blossomed into a tranquil and surprising beauty. It stands in the midst of a wide plain, with a few isolated mountains lying blue along the horizon, and the landscape, which is touched by the loneliness which always belongs to a flat country, is brightened here and there by glimpses of the winding, sparkling Choissette, and by the farm-houses, many of which are painted of a warm, rich-hued red that harmonizes charmingly with the pale yellow of the willows in April or their cloudy masses of later

green. Clumps of willows, which grow quickly and spring up anywhere, meet the eye on every side throughout the country, for these and the tall, stiff poplars are the trees to which the French-Canadians are most partial. Clusters of these latter, whose lower branches are already dead, lift their gaunt arms appealingly to the sky all along the village streets, and give the scenery something of the look of a French landscape.

But, if nature has been kindly inclined toward the place, man has done his best to ruin its looks. In the States one never sees such unveiled monstrosities of ugliness as the better class of houses here. We Americans have at least the taste to drape our ugly structures with trees and set them off by a bit of greenness in front; whereas the worthy well-to-do citizen of St. François builds his house as near the sidewalk as possible, is happy if his steps encroach upon the town's possessions, and, if he is French, fills the little space between his fence and the piazza, which is known in Canadian English as the "gallery," with trees and bushes of all sorts, crowded so closely together that there is room for none to grow, and only the topmost branches, struggling up into the light, are healthfully green; the rest, poor barren dwarfs, only hang out a few yellow leaves,—the sign of their suffering amid a net-work of brown stems. This is in the well-to-do quarter. The poorer buildings are scarcely more picturesque, though some of them have curious slanting roofs which project over their porches, and their boards have been beaten by wind and weather into that soft gray tint which speaks so appealingly of age and long service. To enter some of these dwellings is like passing back for sixty or seventy years into the houses of our ancestors, the household appliances are so scanty and primitive, the furniture so meagre. A spinning-wheel is no uncommon sight; queer old benches and chairs, dented by long service, fill up the corners; smoke and grime and dirt are everywhere; and always there hangs on the wall a colored print, cheap and gaudy, of the doings of some saint. St. Genevieve is a general

favorite. To go into one of these rooms in winter, when doors and windows are kept as tightly closed as possible, is to inhale a breath of poisonous air. How the flowers can blossom in it and the children thrive and grow strong and hardy, as they apparently do, is among the facts which fall in oddly with our modern ideas of healthful living.

Whatever of quaintness and picturesqueness belongs to the buildings of the place centres about the convents and the Catholic church and the Friars' school. Four-fifths of the inhabitants of St. François are Catholics; the church-bells ring continuously on holy-days; the Church festivals are strictly observed, and every Catholic shop in the place is closed. Gray nuns and black nuns move noiselessly along the streets, their faces beaming out from under the white caps that soften and spiritualize even the commonest features. Little processions of priests trot hastily about, their long gowns and broad-brimmed hats marking them out even at a distance from the secular passers-by, as they lead along the flock of boys into whose unwilling brains they are endeavoring to thrust a little learning. The fruit- and vegetable-gardens of the convents are by far the best-tended gardens in the place; and the white statue of the Madonna which looks down from her niche above the door-way of one of them is enshrined between the boughs of a couple of magnificent elms, while in the flower-garden below masses of white and purple lilac deck the gnarled and ancient bushes, so decrepit with age that their boughs bend almost parallel with the ground, and climbing roses and flowering quince and honeysuckle flaunt in their season against the gray walls of the house. From whatever quarter outside its limits one looks back upon the town, the spire of the Catholic church is always the prominent object, rising high above the village houses, as the power which it represents overshadows all the thoughts and actions of the people.

The streets swarm with children. Families of twelve, fourteen, and sixteen; one child just overlapping the

other like the traditional flight of steps, are crowded into these tiny antiquated houses, and overflow on the door-steps in the summer evenings. If the father can command steady work at a dollar a day, he is a lucky man. Some of the big girls take care of themselves, and earn enough in the factories to pay their board and buy their clothes; but the problem of how the poorer classes of French Canadians live is a good deal of an unsolved mystery to those of English blood. Their indifference to work and money is proverbial. As long as they have a cent in their pockets they cannot be induced to lift a hand by the promise of ten dollars. Those pretty young girls with the glossy black hair and large, soft eyes, who stand about in the door-ways on warm evenings, aspire to places in the factory, but they may wait months for a vacancy, and meanwhile no offer of good wages and a comfortable home will persuade them to go to service for a time. The big brother promises to dig your garden, but changes his mind at the last moment and goes fishing or walking instead, and then comes and talks pathetically about the difficulties of getting work, and begs for a bit of bread to keep him from starving. The initiated say that they live mostly on bean-soup, with an occasional feast of all the delicacies of the season when a windfall comes in. They are a fine-looking people. The sturdy, laughing children are marvels of childish beauty, with their rags, and their scanty garments, and their bare brown limbs. To walk along St. Paul's Street on a warm day is to see twenty groups of lovely, dimpled creatures, a little dirty perhaps, and woefully sunburned, but picturesque enough to delight the soul of any artist. Many of them keep their good looks when they grow up. An old woman who kept a stall on the market had a head such as Jules Breton loves to paint. Her face was wrinkled and careworn, and the eyes were sad, but the expression was noble and full of dignity. One of our charwomen, a woman of sixty, had the large regular features and the

commanding form of an Italian. Whatever drapery she wore fell around her in graceful folds, and to watch her as she stooped over the wash-tub or hung out the clothes was to see a hundred natural but perfectly statuesque poses, any one of which was worthy of being clapped into a frame as a picture. Another, much younger, was a perfect little beauty. She was the mother of seven children, but she had the slim figure and the rose-leaf complexion of a young girl. Her clear blue eyes and white forehead wore the saintly look of a Madonna; her ear was pink and exquisite in shape as a sea-shell. She was a wonderful worker, too: her clothes were white as snow, her ironing delightful to look upon, her scrubbing almost a work of art in its way, she made everything so clean. We were charmed with her, and thought we had found a treasure. One morning she was taking the ashes out of the stove, when somebody made some trivial remark to her, and on the instant our little Madonna developed into a Fury: her cheeks grew scarlet, her eyes flashed fire, she burst into a storm of words, and flung the shovel clear across the room, scattering the cinders far and wide. We learned afterward that the outbreak was temper pure and simple. When the fit was not on her she was a kind woman and a skilful worker, but while it lasted she was like one possessed. Her husband was a man of herculean build, who looked as if he could have felled an ox with a blow of his fist, but he used to sneak out of the house like a whipped cur when his pretty little wife raged and stormed, and her children at such times ran away from home to hide with the neighbors.

It is characteristic of St. François and the early hours of the place that the housewife who does not arrive at the village market by six or half-past six in the morning subjects her household to the perils of semi-starvation. The farmers' wives who bring in the fruit and vegetables and butter and eggs from their farms are all in their places by five o'clock, and by eight many of them are already

jogging along on their way homeward. And the market is the chief place for the purchase of edibles in the town of St. François. Its supply is meagre enough, and its customs are primitive. The market-women all ask one price and take another: hence a purchase involves an immense amount of bargaining and chaffering and gesticulating, and the worthy townspeople bid each other good-morning, and jostle each other with their market-baskets and peer down over each other's shoulders along the meagre array upon the counters with much bustling and curiosity. Berries and vegetables are sold in what the natives call "tureens,"—a most vague and elastic term, as a "tureen" appears to an outsider to be anything from a teacup to a scrub-pail. You may buy a tureen-full of raspberries for ten cents, or one for a dollar, and you can only give an indefinite guess at the quantity you are getting for your money. The supply is very scanty, and poor in quality, too. The tiny wild strawberries, wild red raspberries, and chokecherries form the bulk of the fruit obtainable in St. François. The French-Canadian farmer is a slow and conservative gardener, and many vegetables and fruits which would ripen easily in the climate are not cultivated nowadays, simply because his grandfather did not cultivate them before him, and his sluggish brain has not yet awakened to the fact that it would be a wise and profitable thing to raise them. But, if the vegetable-market is scanty, the fish-market on summer mornings is a sight to behold, from the numbers of eels which crawl over and under each other and wriggle along the counters and fall off on the floor, where they lie writhing till the merchant, seeing his wares escaping him, picks them up and stuns them by striking their heads against the wall.

The winter mornings in the North had a strange beauty of their own. The atmosphere was so cold, so tranquil; the early sunshine filled the air with a faint rosy light which tinted the wide snow-fields and even the bare,

brown branches of the trees, and seemed to transfigure the glittering spire and roof of the high gray church standing on the bank of the Choissette, whose unfrozen rapids sent little streams of white mist curling upward through the pinkish haze. In the short twilight the sky was of a pallid, chilly green, clear and pure,—no half tint, but a color such as one sees sometimes on the ocean,—showing in long streaks and spaces between the clouds along the horizon, the harbinger often of a night of perfect beauty, with blue starlit heavens and an atmosphere delightful enough almost to set new life tingling in the veins of a dying man. But, if nature was most beautiful in winter, the iciness of her beauty drove us sometimes to take refuge in the charms of a glowing fireside and the talk of our neighbors. It is an odd commingling of people and customs which one finds in this little town. If much of its speech and the look of its streets reminds the stranger of a Continental town, one element of its population has an intense British flavor. Most of these people have lived in England or Scotland, and all have relatives there and pride themselves upon these connections. They are more English in their ideas than the English themselves. The young men who go out into the world soon get much of this smoothed off and lose their salient points, but the daughters keep it always. Their features are larger and heavier than the sharp, Gallic outlines or the straight noses and clear-cut lines of the Americans; their forms are more robust, and they speak with a strong English accent in the pure English tone. It is almost a bit of England, of the society of some country town dropped down in the midst of this Canadian landscape, whose natural features are so unlike England, and which has already fallen into the hands of the slow, ignorant, contented French-Canadian.

The two peoples differ on almost every point. Religion is, of course, the first great dividing line. There exists between the Protestants and Cath-

olics of St. François a barrier, erected tacitly and upon a mutual understanding and cemented by long ill feeling, which only the boldest spirits in either party dare to disregard. The English are hardly more liberal-minded than the French (in St. François, English and Protestant, French and Catholic, are synonymous terms), and the smell of incense is as poison to the Protestant nostril, and the Protestant ear is shocked beyond expression by the sounds of flute and piano and merry-making which issue from the better class of French houses on Sunday evening; while the Catholic displays in a hundred petty ways his dislike of the Protestant's religious ideas. As the French outnumber the English four to one, they

have naturally the best of the social existence of the place; but that is poor enough, for, as in all small towns, the people are broken up into clans and cliques innumerable.

Life in St. François is slow, stupid, monotonous at times, and yet, after all, it possesses a singular charm, which grows upon one with the length of one's stay amid those opposing, apparently irreconcilable elements. It is contracted within narrow limits, it is true, but within them it is full of flavor and individuality; its ways are simpler and more primitive than our American ones, but they are also less crude and raw; the scope of existence is less, but it is more complete and more tranquil.

MARY STOEYELL.

THE INVENTOR OF THE "AYRSHIRE, LIFE-CAR."

IT is apparent that the New Orleans Exposition embraces a great variety of exhibits, and that it will equal, if not exceed, in interest and extent those that have preceded it in this and foreign countries. Our national government, the executives and legislatures of States, and the governments of foreign nations have united in measures for giving it an international prominence of the most attractive character. It is a competitive exhibition, in which the industries and arts of numerous nationalities meet in friendly rivalry for precedence and superiority, and the results must be of the first importance to production and commerce the world over.

The departments in Washington have selected and shipped specimens representing science and mechanism which have accumulated in the government depositories and gathered interest from their recognized or traditional importance. Among these is an object which has peculiar attractions by reason of its

antecedent associations and service. It is the "Ayrshire Life-Car," invented by Joseph Francis, and constructed, under his supervision, thirty-six years ago.

Its shipment to New Orleans by the direction of the authorities at Washington brings into conspicuous notice this interesting relic of the Life-Saving Service, with all the organizations of which, in this and foreign countries, Mr. Francis has been identified as an active and prominent associate. The present is therefore an opportune time to recapitulate his success in the humane employment to which he has devoted his life.

Mr. Francis was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1801, and at the present time, in the eighty-fourth year of his life, he is mentally and physically hale and vigorous. The design of a life-car was originated by him in 1838, and a patent for his first design was granted to him in that year. In 1840 he completed a covered life-car, constructed of wood, but, being deficient in

strength to resist the force of a heavy surf, it was broken up.

In the effort to find a method for imparting to metallic plates a sufficient resisting force, he resorted to the expedient of corrugation, and, after repeated experiments, he found that corrugated metal, by reason of its resisting power, was adapted to the construction of life surf-boats and life-saving cars; and in 1845 he was allowed a patent for the use of corrugated metal in the construction of all descriptions of vessels.

It is less difficult to invent than to contrive means of manufacture; and it was for Mr. Francis to encounter this discouraging experience. He achieved final success, but it was by tedious, patient, costly trial. One great difficulty he met with was to adapt the corrugated sheet to the shape of the vessel. The side of a boat being irregular in form, and the distance from keel to gunwale midships being one-third greater than at bow or stern, with a difference also of shape in the midship section, there was a gathering or fulness of surplus metal at the bow and stern. It was necessary to have an entirely smooth surface, to insure which the corrugations were changed in form, dimensions, and position, varying according to the model. A set of cast-iron dies were made, ten and a half feet in length, with improved corrugations, and the sheet of iron placed between them; the dies were then forced together. This last experiment was successful. Two perfect sides of a boat were produced, with deep and full corrugations, smooth surface, and free from wrinkle. The two sides were then riveted together, and the corrugated-metal boat was made.

Reports of Mr. Francis's successful tests having been made to the Secretary of the Treasury, galvanized corrugated-metal surf-boats were at once ordered for the life-saving stations, and one corrugated metal life-car, to be tested at the first wreck. Hitherto there had been no organized system of life-saving on the New Jersey and Long Island coasts. The scattered inhabitants on these ocean shores would muster their forces and man

their own frail boats, and by almost superhuman efforts often succeeded in rescuing shipwrecked persons. In these efforts their only reward was the approval of a good conscience and the fame that is conceded to the most noble display of courage of which man is capable. Now came the time for the first test of Mr. Francis's life-car.

On the 12th of January, 1850, the British ship *Ayrshire* was driven ashore on the New Jersey coast in a terrible snow-storm. The sea was beating over her, and the crew and passengers, numbering over two hundred, were in imminent peril. The first shot from the life-saving station was fired so accurately that the line fell across the deck amidships. It was secured by the sailors, a hawser was made fast, hauled ashore, placed at a proper elevation, the Francis Life-Car was attached, and the test "at the first wreck" commenced. The car was capable of carrying only five persons, and necessarily it had to be hauled to and from the wreck through the foaming breakers many times before the rescue was accomplished.

During these proceedings an incident occurred which it is in order at this point to relate. There was on board the *Ayrshire* a gentleman who had in charge two little girls, his nieces. The children were safely placed in the car, which was closed, and just as the signal was given to the life-savers ashore to "haul away," the uncle, against the orders and remonstrances of those having in charge the debarkation of the passengers, sprang upon the top of the car, and was swept into the sea and lost. During the exhibition at the American Institute in New York, a few years ago, this same life-car was one of the objects of interest. Among the visitors were two ladies, sisters. They had come to see the life-car, not for its novelty, but for a service it had done them many years before. They were the rescued children. At the present time they are both married and reside in New York City.

In some cases the car is not necessary, but the Francis life-boats are used instead, being adapted to the purpose by

their extraordinary strength and buoyancy. They are so light and so accurately modelled as always to ride above and over the breakers. The iron sheets of which they are made are corrugated in parallel lines by means of dies and the hydraulic press.

At the great exhibition at the United States Arsenal in Washington of life-cars, life-boats, and army-wagons capable of being used as pontoons (all the inventions of Mr. Francis), the "Ayrshire Life-Car" attracted the special attention and received the official approval of President Lincoln, Secretaries Seward, Chase, Stanton, and Upshur, and Postmaster-General Blair. The car has been at all the exhibitions in this country, and was at the Fisheries Exposition in London in 1883.

Prior to 1840 the life-boats of Mr. Francis had become renowned all over the world. In 1841, when the fact became known that he contemplated the construction of a covered iron vessel to be used for rescuing from wrecks, the "International Shipwreck Society for all Nations" applied to him for a description of his latest invention. He promptly complied, and was immediately made a "Benefactor" of the Society, and was subsequently honored with a diploma, enclosed in a letter of which the following is a translation:

"PARIS, February 1, 1842.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have the honor to address you this diploma of honor and solicit your correspondence with the Society. The Superior Council of this great institution, wishing to give you a proof of esteem, has admitted you to the number of its members and recorded your name among those of the benefactors. I am gratified, my dear sir, in being the medium of communication for the Society, and in being able to offer you my kind regards.

"Your very humble

"and obedient servant,

"GODE DE LIANCOURT,

"Director-General.

"To Mr. JOSEPH FRANCIS,
"New York, U.S.A."

The King of France was then the head of the Society. The diploma was brodered with the coats of arms of France, England, Italy, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, Russia, Prussia, the Brazils, Morocco, Tunis, Algiers, and the two Americas, and draped with the different flags. At the request of the Society, Mr. Francis joined in an effort to form an American Shipwreck Society, and at this time received the following letter from the British branch:

"LONDON, July 4, 1843.

"DEAR SIR,—The Supreme Council of the Royal English Section of the International Shipwreck Society of France is very happy to add this testimony of its approbation, and it has unanimously decided to present you with a MEDAL OF HONOR. The Superior Administration will forward to you by the next courier the Medal and Diploma. Be pleased to receive the assurance of our high esteem.

"EDWARD WARREN, V.P.

"JOSEPH FRANCIS,
"Benefactor of the Imperial Royal
"European Society."

Preliminary to the formation of a Section of the International Society in the United States, Mr. Francis laid the subject before the members of the American Institute, a meeting of which was called and resulted in the organization of the "American Shipwreck and Humane Society."

Among the distinguished names identified with the original organization were those of J. P. D. Ogden, Dr. John W. Francis, Rev. Dr. Dewey, Moses H. Grinnell, Valentine Mott, Rev. Dr. Wainwright, Rev. Dr. Spring, and Charles H. Marshall.

The Society pursued its humane objects for some years and with great success, but, finding the field too large for their management, urged upon the government the necessity of establishing stations on the coasts with life-boats and apparatus for the rescue of the shipwrecked. The New York Board of Underwriters and Chamber of Com-

merce joined in the request. Congress made the necessary appropriations, life-saving-stations were established, and the government assumed the care, control, and responsibility of the service.

In March, 1852, during the experiment of removing rocks from the channel at Hurlgate, an accident occurred by which two men were killed and Professor Maillefert and his brother narrowly escaped a similar fate. It was caused by the premature explosion of a canister adjacent to the boats, blowing a wooden boat to atoms, and sending the Francis life-boat, with the professor and his brother, one hundred feet upward. The boat received no material injury, and when the professor and his brother dropped into the water their boat was floating near them, and they were saved. The professor wrote to Mr. Francis a grateful acknowledgment of his wonderful preservation, in which he said, "God in his infinite mercy pointed you out through your invention, the life-boat, to be the means of saving me, first from being horribly mutilated by the late explosion at Hurlgate, and then again from being drowned. . . . May your country reward you according to your merit."

Mr. Francis's country did not reward him according to his merit. It did not reward him pecuniarily, nor by any distinguished recognition. This was reserved for foreign nations.

After forty years of continuous and diligent application in life-saving work, having the value of his inventions acknowledged by the governments and scientific men of Europe, having established an extensive factory for their manufacture, having supplied the government at home and the mercantile marine, Mr. Francis went abroad. Upon his arrival in France he found that his name and his fame had preceded him, and persistent efforts immediately ensued to have his inventions introduced. The members of the Shipwreck and Benevolent Society were especially persevering, and after some weeks he received an order from the Emperor requesting an interview. Sub-

sequently a time was appointed and trials were made of his pontoon-wagons and life-boats. The complete success of these tests is certified in the following letter:

"PALAIS DES TUILERIES,

"CABINET DE L'EMPEREUR, le 4 Février, 1856.

"SIR,—The Emperor has witnessed with great interest the experiments which have taken place in the river Seine with the pontoon-carriage of your invention. His majesty has also taken pleasure in witnessing the tests of the boats of corrugated metal which you have constructed.

"The Emperor hopes that your inventions may establish in France the foundation of a new branch of industry, applicable to the public service of war and for the navy, as well as to our mercantile marine; and his majesty has directed me to inform you that he will learn with pleasure your determination on this subject.

"I am happy in having to transmit to you the accompanying order of Knighthood and gold box, which the Emperor sends as a testimonial of his satisfaction.

"Accept the assurance of my distinguished sentiments.

"FAVE.

"TO MR. JOSEPH FRANCIS."

The gold box, which is still in the possession of Mr. Francis, is studded with eighty-six diamonds set in blue enamel, with a crown and the initial letter "N" upon the cover.

In England similar and successful tests were made, and in Hamburg a large factory was built for the manufacture of metallic life-boats, life-cars, and pontoon-carriages.

While in Hamburg, Mr. Francis received an invitation from the Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria to visit Vienna, and, upon his arrival, an exhibition was held upon a magnificent scale. The tests were successful, and it was conceded that the formality and display given to the exhibition by the attendance of the Emperor, the members of the court and state, were intended as a compliment to the American inventor.

In Russia, the trials were extensive and attended with the most critical scientific and mechanical investigation. The result may be inferred from the following diploma:

"We, by the Grace of God, Alexander the Second, Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias, Czar of Poland, Grand Duke of Finland, etc., etc., etc.,

"To JOSEPH FRANCIS, Citizen of the United States of North America:

"The Ministry of Marine having testified to your particular services, We have graciously been pleased to nominate you a Knight of our Imperial and Royal Order of Saint Stanislas, by a Ukaz of November 7, 1860, given to Our Chapter of Orders, to the end that they do sign and seal this diploma in witness thereof, and forward to you the Insignia of the Order.

"St. Petersburg, this 10th day of November, 1860.

(Signed) "VICE-PRESIDENT COUNT BORCH.

"The Lieutenant-General Grand Master of Ceremonies, REITROVO."

If any doubt could possibly have existed as to Mr. Francis's having originated the inventions which bear his name, and which have performed their humane offices nearly half a century, it has been set at rest by the recent investigations of a commission created for that purpose. He has been officially notified of this fact, and of the full identification of his car that saved two hundred and one lives from the wreck of the Ayrshire, by a letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, the late Hon. Charles J. Folger; and the appearance of this car at the New Orleans Exposition, without a cloud upon its inventor's title, will be the first, last, and only formal recognition Mr. Francis has had from his own country, which he has in his humane pursuit served so long and so well.

C. W. FITCH.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

How to Spend Christmas.

THERE must be a reality, a simplicity about Christmas usages in order to fix deep in the heart the underlying principle which makes the real festival. Present-giving is all very well, provided people remember the anathema in the Koran, "Cursed is he who giveth unto the rich," and offer their bounty to the needy, the hopeless, and the young. Roast turkey and plum-pudding are pleasant institutions in their way, but they do not completely fill up Christmas day. The more sentiment and poetry that can be infused into the holiday celebration, the more charm and satisfaction will be found in it. It is difficult for grown-up people to be very jolly or very poetic on particular occasions, but the perpetuity of Christmas lies in the fact that it has become a children's festival. "A little child shall lead them:" so let us teach the little children how to spend Christmas, forgetful

of self,—with a joy in doing, helping, and bestowing. Since we cannot invent feast-days and Yule-tides for ourselves, it is just as well to adapt to our uses the poetic ideas of more primitive people.

Christmas Eve is the best half of Christmas. Everything then exists in imagination and foretaste. There is something a little eerie and weird in the sight of the gathering twilight. Christmas has begun. All day long Peter, the hired man, helped by Jack, Teddy, and Elizabeth, has been bringing home the greens from the woods. There they lie in the hall, a fragrant mass of laurel-leaves, cedar and hemlock boughs, prince's feather, and ground-pine. The moment the sun is down, all the young people set to work to trim the house. Festoons are looped from picture to picture, great branches are placed in each corner, wreaths are hung in the windows. It is a delightful evening's work; and there can be no prettier sight than

the aimless labors of the little toddlers who spend all their strength in trying to weave garlands over which they finally fall asleep. When the house is dressed with greens, there comes a pause before the spreading of the feast. There is a vague expectation; a sort of thrill runs through the group; the presence of something is in the air. And, true enough, here enter three gnomes, or elves, dragging in the Christmas-tree. Grown-up people would know at once what the very garments are which go to the make-up of these strange and uncanny-looking beings; but the little folks feel a delightful awe at such mysterious presences invoked by their Christmas rites. And when the three circle round the tree, crooning out a monotonous chant,—

At Christmas be merry, and thank God of all,
And feast thy poor neighbors, the great with
the small,
Yea, all the year long have an eye to the poor,
And Christ shall send luck to keep open thy
door,—

they tremble and are almost ready to keep out of sight.

After this is concluded, a supper before going to bed is in order. The tree looms up in wonderful beauty through all the childish dreams. There has been a costly sacrifice to it during the night, for in the morning, when the first child peeps in, it stands no longer bare as the elves brought it, but resplendent with stars, spangles, golden oranges, and translucent sweets. The tapers, still unlighted, gleam in waxen beauty against the dark evergreen. All through breakfast and church-service the tree glitters like an enchanted vision through the joyous imaginations. The intervening hours between church and dinner are to be filled up with carrying Christmas-presents to outside people,—the old woman who lives alone, the widow with her three children, and the lame blacksmith who lost his grandchild last year. Then the dressing for dinner, whose delicious odors fill the house already; then the eating of the turkey, the chicken-pie, and the flaming pudding, which would light up the blackest night like a good

deed in a naughty world. Then, when the shadows gather, the curtains are drawn, the groups nestle before the fire, until—Everybody knows that now the Christmas-tree is being lighted. The boys are ready with a "hurrah" as the folding-doors are flung wide, for the longed-for moment has come. The climax has been kept till the proper moment, and no experience could be more blissful than the final unfolding of the Christmas mysteries. L. W.

Two Relics.

By a curious but here unimportant combination of circumstances, there chanced lately to fall into my hands two relics of a woman who died a hundred years ago. She was not an ancestress of mine, and, beyond the fact that these two relics were undoubtedly her own, I know absolutely nothing of her, though something may be gathered by a little study of the keepsakes themselves.

A letter and a slipper seem but trifling things, that the woman should have kept them and her descendants have cherished them for a hundred years. Here they are, however, and perhaps to their age is due a little of that curious consideration which might not be claimed for them upon any other score. Let us read the letter first, while beside us on the desk perches the slipper, coquettish, pert, and self-conscious to the last degree. It is a brief letter, though it contains much wisdom of a sober sort. It is a love-letter, though a modern maiden might read it through without being aware of this delicious fact. It is written upon a broad sheet of gray-white paper, quaintly folded, and once sealed with red wax. The impression was broken in opening the letter, so that we cannot distinguish the device of the seal. Perhaps this indicates that there was some haste and eagerness on the lady's part in the opening of the missive. The spelling is not always in strict accordance with the demands of modern usage, and the capital letters have the appearance of having been driven in in a flock. This may be a

sign of impetuosity in the writer, and surely there are few enough such signs in this well-considered epistle. Here it is, exactly transcribed, and given, after over a hundred years of dignified seclusion, to the cold and critical eyes of the discriminating reader :

"ROXBURY, June 30, 1777.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—There are no obligations so great, no connections so near, neither any friendship so endearing as that which ought always to subsist between husband and Wife ; it shall be my business in this Epistle to give you my Sentiments upon this, of all other most important transactions of Life. The all wise Governor of the universe has thought fit to implant a Love and desire for the enjoyment of each other in their very Natures, and where this Love and desire subsists in a manner suited to the design of the great Author of it, it affords great matter of joy and satisfaction to the parties so united, and that this may take place in its full extent there ought to be a fixt resolution in the parties to Love, Respect, and Esteem each other—by condescending to one another in everything reasonable and just. Kindness and Effection ought always to mark the line of their conduct towards each other. Indeed there is no describing the Tranquility which results from a Married state, where they are so happily United together. Love always cements the bonds of society—and where there subsists these Virtues, where there is no point to carry, no Interests to serve but what tend to their mutual benefit—where both strive to be foremost in Kindness and good Offices—it creates as it were a little Heaven on Earth, it alleviates and ballances every other difficulty which is incident to human Life—and what is of infinitely greater moment it affords each other an opportunity of preparing for that Felicity, which (if we act our parts well) await us beyond Death and the Grave. These my dear, are my Sentim'ts. That you may have the happiness to know by Experience the truth of what I have asserted is my Ardent

wish—and I hope will be the sincere endeavor of both. I am on all Occasions, my dear Lois, your sincere Friend and Humble servant,

"JABEZ POINDEXTER.

"To Mrs. LOIS ENDICOTT."

One can scarcely read any letter without drawing a mental picture of its writer, and particularly of an ancient love-letter such as this must one run into all manner of speculations concerning the shadowy author. One fancies him to have been rather a Puritan, austere, rigidly upright, a strict keeper of the Sabbath, and decidedly severe upon worldly vanities. A bit of a prig he may have been, yet not a Pharisee, for his letter, though stilted, breathes kindness and a dignified simplicity. It can but impress the reader with its truth and earnestness, though in sooth its pulses beat slowly for those of a love-letter.

Now, how could such a man as this eminently pious Jabez Poindexter have fallen in love with the wearer of this eminently worldly slipper? To begin with, it is small,—which is well, if we are to believe that Frenchman who declared that, while a large hand is a misfortune, a large foot is a crime. The smallness is, moreover, emphasized by the way in which the heel—two and a half inches high, and half the size, on the bottom, of a silver dollar—runs far under the sole. It is stayed across the back by a narrow band of buff morocco, in spite of which, however, it is torn straight down the right side, as if the little shoe fitted too snugly or was pulled impatiently from the pretty foot it covered. The toe is pointed sharply, and the material is creamy white silk, brocaded with small bunches of saffron flowers, joined by a festooning vine to clusters of dark-red cherries, three in a bunch. Pasted to the white kid sole within is the time-yellowed label of the English maker, surmounted by the lion and the unicorn fighting for the crown. The label is worn by the restless little foot that was once within the shoe, but one can still read,—set forth with many

a long-tailed s,—“Sutton, Shoemaker to Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cumberland. Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London.”

Comparative anatomists construct an entire animal from a single bone, and in like manner we can build a woman from a brocade slipper. This slipper must have danced. It was never a sober-minded sort of slipper, with that coquettish heel and pointed toe. Its wearer may have danced a gavotte in some old colonial mansion, or tripped sedately through a minuet in the Province House in a brocaded petticoat and flowered gown. She must have wielded an enormous fan, and powdered her hair, and even fixed a patch beside the dimple in her peachy cheek. If, then, she was so light-minded and dearly loved a rout, how could the sober soul of Jabez Poindexter have excuse to approve her?

They are incongruous relics, the wicked slipper and the strait-laced tale of “effection.” The woman kept the letter. Did she marry the man?

E. P.

A Chat about Models.

As I sat waiting the other day for an unpunctual model, easel and palette all ready for work, while, until the loiterer appeared, nothing could be done, I seemed to see in fancy a long procession of models filing past me, and I could not but be struck with the amusing incongruities which their rôles in the studio and their after-career presented. Either for myself or some artist friend each of the cavalcade had posed, but the Queen of Sheba now sells tape in a little notion-store, Don Quixote carries plaster images through the streets, and the last time I heard of Henry VIII. he was spending a fortnight in the Tombs for theft. Maud Muller has recently married Louis XVI., and George Washington, after manifold labors in the studio, has escaped from our grasp, and has been heard to affirm that the hardest kind of manual labor is more tolerable than sitting still at first-rate pay by the hour.

I must own to a fondness for cap-

turing as a model an entirely fresh and inexperienced victim, for, despite the fact that he of course does not understand posing so well as those accustomed to the work, there is a comfort in painting a face that you are not doomed to see staring at you from every other canvas at a local exhibition. Well do I remember the triumph with which little Hans, a fair-haired Swede, quite a favorite model here a few years ago, announced to me that his picture was to be twelve times in the Academy that spring!

Among my pleasantest reminiscences of models are of those whom chance has thrown in my way, often the occupants of an Italian “piano” or a German “stock,” above or below us. There was dear little Annah, at Munich, posing in the wide window-seat, knitting with her left hand, a demure smile upon her pretty face, and an occasional sly peep taken from the corner of her eye at the children in the street, to whom she was an object of mingled commiseration and envy according as the work or the pay impressed itself upon their minds. And then comes up before me Tobias Zwink, our kind host in the Tyrol, who posed for me in his fascinating green hat, with its edelweiss stuck jauntily at the side, and I recall the grateful delight of Frau Zwink when the portrait of her better half was duly presented to her, and received with assurances of its holding forever the most honored place on their walls. Antonio, too, our Italian driver, who besought me to paint his face a paler hue than it was by nature, lest the beholders of the sketch might suppose him a wine-bibber, is an agreeable figure in my recollections.

But specially and with greatest pleasure do I recall Pepina, the daughter of our padrona at Rome. She was one of four sisters, and, to my mind, by far the prettiest of the quartet, though the family vote was in favor of Ernesta, the youngest. Her face, it is true, was of a more regular type, but an air of consciousness spoiled it and caused me to turn with much more satisfaction to Pepina,—Giuseppina,—whose rich, dark

skin, glorious eyes, and pleasing ways made her my favorite. Many an interesting chat we two had together, though my Italian was limited and her English and French not in existence at all. She said to me one day, "Are you religious, signorina?" "I hope so," I answered, "but the signora," indicating my mother, "is very much so." Pepina seemed somewhat relieved, but soon began again: "Do you believe in God, signorina?" "Certainly, Pina," I replied. "And in the Blessed Virgin?" "As a very good woman, yes, but not as you do." Her bright face was overshadowed, and she queried again, but doubtfully, "And you pray to the saints, signorina?" "No." "And surely you obey the Holy Father in the Vatican?" "No, Pina." "Ah, *Dio mio!* how strange! Do you pray to Jesus Christ?" "Yes, Pepina, there we do agree," I said, glad to see a more cheerful look on her mobile countenance. "Ah, *grazia*, signorina! I suppose," after a long pause, and with pity in her tones, "you believe as you were taught, and maybe in heaven you will believe as you should do; but how strange here!"

The betrothed of Ernesta was a topic of much interest to them all, and I was highly favored once in having him pointed out to me through the lattice. He came on Sunday evenings, when the conversation was chiefly between the "madre" and him, the others sitting dutifully by and enjoying the talk in silence. During the Carnival, our fat but good-natured landlady made a stupendous effort, and took the girls, two each evening, to a ball. Michele, the "sposo," was there, and appreciated so highly the privilege of a dance and talk with his betrothed that he wrote the next morning a note to his future mother-in-law, saying that it had been such a pleasure to him he would pray the "madre" to bring Ernesta again. The petition was graciously granted, and the young lady thus obtained a double share of the unwonted gayety.

Dear little Pepina's *affaire de cœur* did not seem to prosper as her sister's did.

She came into my room one evening, her eyes flashing and her cheeks aglow. "Ah, signorina, when an engagement is broken off in America do they send everything back to each other?" "Certainly," I said; "but why do you ask, Pepina? You have not quarrelled with Vincenzo, have you?" "I have heard," she said, with an air of offended majesty, and illustrating in pantomime, "that he has been seen in Naples with some one hanging on his arm as they walked, and I—" "Oh, but," I said, "that may be only hearsay: if you care much for him you will not give him up on such slight testimony. I don't believe you *do* care much, Pina." "Ah, but I do, signorina; but," giving me *such* a glance from under her dark eyelashes, "I don't think it will do any harm to frighten him just a little." A few days later Pina came in, looking sad and heavy-eyed, and in answer to my queries I was told by the sisters that "Pepina *piange*" (weeps) all the day long, for Vincenzo was dangerously ill, and the anger had melted like snow in the sunshine. Vincenzo, it seemed, was handsome and clever, but was not smiled upon by the "madre." A charming little poem he had written to the lady of his love came into our possession in a curious way. Pepina, who regarded us with much affection and respect, presented us with a copy, the dedication altered and some words changed to make it appropriate as coming from her to us instead of from Vincenzo to herself.

My most amusing experience of late has been in the Mexican quarter of San Antonio, where sundry picturesque little mortals, as dirty as possible, posed for some rapid sketches. Spanish being as Greek to me, an obliging young fellow, from whose father the Mexicans rented their little hovels, acted as interpreter. In a large bare enclosure clustered a number of huts, where swarms of the dark-hued beings lived. I could have sketched children by the dozen had I had the time; but when I asked my interpreter to invite an old woman with a gorgeous red petticoat to pose, he said he did not like to do so, it would not be

respectful. Gregorio, a charming little fellow of five or six, and Carlotta, sat or stood cheerfully, and, on entering one of the huts, a woman, grinding corn for "tortillas" on a metal or stone mill, rewarded my enterprise. San Antonio is a very cosmopolitan place, for that afternoon, as I sat painting by the river, a Frenchman rode through the ford and declined to leave until he and his gay saddle were introduced into the sketch. One longs for a power of transferring instantly to the canvas the unconscious and graceful poses, for one word to the model and he stiffens at once, taking some such position as the little San Antonio boys, who drew up in a line directly facing me, all full view.

One might write on indefinitely of the mingled pleasure and pain one finds

in painting one's friends, who do not, alas! always regard it as a pleasure to sit after the first pose, and of the anxiety, on the other hand, of painting from professionals, who are sometimes dishonest, often unreliable and lacking in intelligent conception of what they are to do, look, and be. Would that a friend I once had to pose for me were always ready to do so, and could assume protean forms! She took for the time the character and expression so completely that the fault lay altogether in the artist when the picture came but half-way up to the conception. But such treasures are rare indeed. Until there is more enthusiasm to pose, one must be content to wait and suffer, as the unfortunate writer of these lines is doing, while the model tarries yet.

P. D. N.

LITERATURE OF THE DAY.

"Nathaniel Hawthorne and his Wife." A Biography. By Julian Hawthorne. Boston: James R. Osgood & Co.

HAWTHORNE's personality has always been a subject of peculiar curiosity with his readers, and—as appears from the statements of his biographer—of some fantastic misconceptions, and even of certain slanderous fabrications, the former as depreciatory of his intellect as the latter were calumnious in regard to his character and habits. There are people, it seems, who "from what was assumed to be the internal evidence of his writings" have constructed "an imaginary Hawthorne,"—"a sort of morbid, timid, milk-and-water Frankenstein, who was drawn on by a grisly fascination to discuss fearful conceptions, and was in a chronic state of being frightened almost into hysterics by the chimeras of his own fancy." And, on the other hand, there are persons, "some of whom were acquaintances of Hawthorne during his bachelor days and for a time afterwards, who maintain that he not only possessed broad and even low human sympathies and tendencies, but that he was by no means proof against temptation, and that

it was only by the kind precaution and charitable silence of his friends that his dissolute excesses have remained so long concealed." On this matter Mr. Julian Hawthorne enlarges to a degree that seems to us neither needful nor altogether in good taste. It would have been sufficient and much more dignified to offer a simple indignant or contemptuous denial of accusations that existed only in the form of rumor, without giving versions of them, in his own language, that have all the particularity of an indictment for libel. It is not by his son that we care to be informed that the author of "The Scarlet Letter" has been described as "a tippler," "a confirmed inebriate," "the victim of an insatiable appetite for gin, brandy, and rum." The one fact of interest that comes out in this unsavory discussion is that Hawthorne, while himself a man of strict sobriety and entire self-restraint, was not intolerant or censorious in regard to the excesses of others,—a trait that harmonizes with the general impression of him, derived especially from the "Note-Books," as a singularly unimpassioned observer and student of human nature. As to the grotesque

image of him as "a venerable and bloodless sage, with dim eyes, thin white hair, and an excess of spirituality," we cannot see that it was worth even a passing notice. In truth, it is difficult to believe that the black and distorted pictures which Mr. Julian Hawthorne holds up for reprobation do not owe some of their touches to his own talent for exaggeration, which has employed itself in heightening the effects of stupidity and malevolence in order to render their grossness more palpable and strengthen by contrast the charm and fidelity of the portrait he has himself presented. The impression which he has sought to produce would have been more complete if, instead of deepening the shadows, he had concentrated the light, which is too often broken and scattered without even the compensation of a reflected radiance. Among the letters given in these volumes those of Hawthorne himself, however unimportant the matters they deal with, have the flavor of his individuality, as well as his unrivalled grace and delicacy of expression, and those of his wife, though of less intrinsic value and interest, belong of right to this record of their joint lives and give it a stronger current of emotion than it might otherwise have possessed. But there are many letters from other persons which had no good claim to insertion either on their own merits or from their relation to the subject, and which, far from adding to the real material, seem only to draw attention to its comparative scantiness. It was a serious disadvantage to the biographer that the revelation which he has aspired to make should to a considerable extent have been forestalled by the publication of the "Note-Books." In these, Hawthorne's "human and natural (as distinct from his merely imaginative and artistic) personality" was already distinctly, though not completely, revealed. A persistently reflective and tentative spirit, intellectual sympathy coupled with a certain aloofness as regarded both other natures and positive or dogmatic opinions, purity and refinement of taste without actual fastidiousness, a sobriety of judgment and expression that nevertheless suggested a capacity for exalted feelings and strong aversions, a tendency to speculate on mysteries with a clearness of intelligence that forbade any possible lapse into mysticism,—these and other idiosyncrasies were unconsciously displayed, and are not more distinctly brought out in the volumes before

us. The biography supplements, but does not supersede, the "Note-Books," which, as sources for a psychological study, have a greater fulness, besides being free from any foreign admixture.

It is not, therefore, a hitherto unknown Hawthorne who is here depicted, but the one of whom it has long been possible to form a definite and correct conception, needing only stronger lines and a plenitude of details. These the biography gives us, if not with so masterly a hand or with such completeness as might have been desired, yet in a degree that calls for our grateful recognition. As a narrative it lacks solidity, and as a portraiture it fails in vividness. Some consciousness of the former deficiency may account for the padding to which we have already alluded, and it seems an acknowledgment of the latter defect when we are told at the close that "men like Hawthorne can never be touched and dissected, because the essence of their character is never concretely manifested. They must be studied more in their effects than in themselves; and at last the true revelation will be made only to those who have in themselves somewhat of the same mystery they seek to fathom." This is "tall" language, but the gist of it is that Mr. Julian Hawthorne declines to give the reader such assistance as might reasonably be demanded of a biographer possessed of the adequate knowledge and insight. After all, the "mystery"—in part the result of temperament, in part of early isolation—does not seem to us a very profound one. Hawthorne was uncommunicative, as he himself intimates, not because he courted concealment, but because he had few congenial associates, and was too wise as well as too unimpulsive to seek sympathy where it was not to be found. There were no complications in his character or in his conduct making his tendencies or his motives difficult to understand and to reconcile. On the contrary, his freedom from inward struggles and tumultuous passions, as well as from any active participation or animated interest in the world's doings and sayings, simplifies in his case the common conditions under which the problems of human character are to be studied. Another favorable element was his perfect physical health during the greater portion of his life, excluding the necessity for taking into account the effects of weak nerves, a diseased stomach, or an overtasked brain, and contributing to the pres-

ervation of that fine mental poise—that exemption from illusions and disenchantments, from alternate exaltation and depression—which seems to us to have been one of his most striking characteristics. Doubtless the general drift of his temperament was toward a paralyzing melancholy; but from this fatality, so long at least as health remained intact, he was saved by a companionship that met his deepest needs and furnished a gentle yet effective stimulant to his powers. The history of that union, as told chiefly in the letters between the pair, forms the most attractive feature, as regards both novelty and charm, of this biography. It is the story of a married life unmarred, apparently, from first to last, by any failure of tenderness, of mutual confidence and appreciation, of constant helpfulness and serenity. We can easily assent to the biographer's remark that "the most fortunate event of his [Nathaniel Hawthorne's] life was, probably, his marriage with Sophia Peabody," and credit his description of the beneficial influence which the wife exercised on her husband's literary work. But when we are told that "to attempt to explain and describe his career without taking this event into consideration would be like trying to imagine a sun without heat, or a day without a sun," we can only see in such phrases a proof that the writer has never made his father's style a model for imitation. Hawthorne's creative faculty could not have remained wholly undeveloped under any circumstances. It had received its peculiar bent in early life, with no impulse from without beyond that of the impressions which unconsciously moulded his susceptible imagination. The "Twice-Told Tales" were written before his acquaintance with his future wife, and the first years of his married life seem to have been among those in which his pen was least productive. Never, it is true, did a man of equal gifts more require to be spurred; but the strongest spur came from the loss of the Salem surveyorship, when "The Scarlet Letter" was begun on the very day of his dismissal. It is in fact a little singular to find that, much as Hawthorne owed to his wife, any influence of hers on his way of thinking or feeling is undiscernible in this account of their lives. It was owing, doubtless, to the very closeness and entirety of their affection that they were able to maintain without discordancy

their independence as regarded views and character. His marriage, as already remarked, saved Hawthorne from the gloom that might otherwise have settled upon the meridian of his life, but it could not give to his nature a heat and glow that had no internal source. A year or so before his death he writes in this characteristic strain: "I have been a happy man, and yet I do not remember any one moment of such happy conspiring circumstances that I could have rung a joy-bell at it." The joy-bell might be rung, he thought, "at the moment of death." We cannot accept his son's explanation of his willingness to die,—that "he inevitably desired, and felt the need of, the greater scope and freedom of a life emancipated from earthly conditions;" but it may be conceded that his lucid intellect, which measured most things at their true value, had something to do with the absence of that ardor with which most men, according to their capacities and opportunities, pursue what they consider the chief aims of life, and of the tenacity with which they cling to life itself.

In a biography like this, one does not expect gossip or anecdotes picked up in social or literary circles, and the few things of the kind retailed in the letters—such as a story that Lord Landsdowne was the original of Thackeray's Marquis of Steyne—lack all semblance of verity, showing that the writer and his authorities were remote from the sources of information on such points and unqualified to sift it. Nor do we find here many of those curious studies of character which abound in the "Note-Books," and which might have served far better as suggestions for artistic work than "The Bloody Footstep" and other bits of melodrama by which Hawthorne in his later years sought in vain to stimulate his exhausted imagination. There is, however, one piece of genre painting in these volumes—the subject, Martin Farquhar Tupper in the midst of his family—which is perfect in its way, and, like so many others from the same hand, not less interesting from the glimpses which it gives us of the artist's own nature than from its objective fidelity and the amusing quaintness of the scene itself. Quite in a different style is the keen and cruel dissection of poor Margaret Fuller's character, which occurs in a passage from the "Roman Journal," and which comes upon us with the effect of a sudden explosion in a tranquil atmosphere.

"Alice, Grand Duchess of Hesse, Princess of Great Britain and Ireland." Biographical Sketch and Letters. With Portrait. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

THIS fine edition of the letters of the Princess Alice is a genuine Christmas-book, and ought to be a favorite for the holidays, although it does not come under the category of mere books of the season. It is a story of touching and sacred meanings, giving the record of a woman's life lived in submission to the highest duties which fate can impose. It might have been lived just as simply and nobly in a cottage. But "it is possible to live well in a palace," said Marcus Aurelius, and it seems to be one of the great missions of modern Germany to show Europe how its princes can lead existences inflexible, austere, approaching every duty with a feeling of exaltation and lofty responsibility, yet graced by all the domestic virtues that sweeten and sanctify human experiences. Everything combines to show that Alice of England possessed a nature framed for the most intense enjoyment of life, but her father's death, which followed close upon her engagement to Louis of Hesse, was an inexorable sorrow which seems never to have been absent from her mind in her happiest moments afterward. Her marriage was one of intimate affection and sympathy, but one doubts in reading her letters whether Germany ever answered her wishes and aptitudes as a place of residence. The climate tried her health, she had few social resources, and much that she longed for intellectually was out of her reach. She was always striving for more culture, and never satisfied except in learning something. "All the natural cleverness and sharpness in the world," she writes to Queen Victoria, "won't serve nowadays unless one has learned something. I feel this so much; and just in our position it is more and more required and expected, particularly in a small place where so much depends on the personal knowledge and exertions of the princes." From first to last the most perfect conquest of self is visible in her. Her energies were beneficent and inexhaustible. Few troubles which women of any class have to confront were absent from her experiences. In spite of the annual endowment from England of thirty thousand pounds, the grand-ducal household was always poor. She made the dresses for her little girls, and looked after economies and frugalities in what Americans

would consider a very unprincely fashion. Her health and the health of her children suffered from the ill-drained houses in which they lived, and to which she succumbed at last. There were wars and rumors of wars incessantly; her husband was frequently in action, and she herself took care of the wounded and dying from the many battle-fields. Their little principality was shorn of much of its wealth and territory after the defeat of Austria; and finally death assailed her happy little group of children in the cruelest shape. All this little history is very simply and sweetly told in letters (with here and there words of comment and explanation) overflowing with intimate family feeling and closest sympathy. There are many compensations, but again and again one is struck by a sort of weary appeal for escape from the turmoil of life into irrevocable peace; and when Alice dies at last,—a needlessly sacrificed life, it must appear to us,—one is conscious that the great night and silence which has overtaken her could not have been wholly unwelcome.

Illustrated Books.

"Illustrated Poems." By Oliver Wendell Holmes. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

"Nature's Serial Story." By Edward P. Roe. Illustrated by W. Hamilton Gibson and F. Dielman. New York: Harper & Brothers.

"Half a Century of English History. Pictorially Presented in a Series of Cartoons from the Collection of Mr. Punch." New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

"The Wagoner of the Alleghanies." By T. Buchanan Read. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co.

"Our Great Benefactors." Edited by Samuel Adams Drake. Boston: Roberts Brothers.

"The Land of Rip Van Winkle: A Tour through the Romantic Parts of the Catskills. Its Legends and Traditions." By A. E. P. Searing. With Illustrations. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

"Katie." By Henry Timrod. New York: E. J. Hale & Son.

THE originality and individual flavor of Dr. Holmes's poems, besides their sunny clearness of meaning, must endear them to every reader. They show in general the author's coquettings with the Muse rather than his earnest devotion to her; and in none of his work is to be found that enamoured although half-despairing effort of most of the minor

poets to invest in outward and visible shape their vague inward impressions of the ideal. They are eloquent of the sunny calm and the wise insight of age rather than of the struggles of youth. To start with, he has invariably an explicit idea, which he treats like a man of the world and the easy master of a good style. Many of the poems collected here originally

by season season'd were
To their right praise and true perfection,

and recall vanished times and the vanished members of that famous Boston coterie which is now so cruelly thinned. Others, like the inimitable "One-Hoss-Shay" and "Under the Violets," bring up the triumphs of the Autocrat and the Professor at the breakfast-table. Messrs. Houghton & Mifflin excel in the art of paying tributes to their authors, and it must be an agreeable experience for a poet to gather his sheaves in such a shape as this. Nothing can be more perfect than the paper and printing of this edition. The etching of the picture of Dr. Holmes is a very excellent piece of work, besides being a faithful portrait, and the illustrations are for the most part fairly good. One lamentable instance of failure must, however, be noted, occurring as it does most unfortunately where it especially defeats expectation, and that is the final catastrophe which overtook the Deacon's masterpiece. The designer's conception of the author's meaning is quite inadequate. This is a mere vulgar breakdown, while what happened was quite different:

What do you think the parson found
When he got up and stared around?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground.

Mr. Gibson's delightful drawings must under any circumstances make an attractive book, but is it not putting Pegasus in harness to link his aerial and exquisite fancies to the cumbrous machinery of a dull and utterly commonplace novel like "Nature's Serial Story"? Mr. Gibson's pastoral sketches are all so natural, so true, so endeared to all lovers of the country by long association, that they pass into the realms of poetic art. They are fragrant with the scent of fir-trees, of the newly-ploughed earth, and of the first blossoms of the spring. They are themselves full of literary and imaginary charm. But we do not perceive that in any sense they can be said to illustrate Mr. Roe's story, and the effect

of the juxtaposition is almost bewildering. Mr. Dielman's work follows the text more closely, and some of his designs are very graceful and pleasing,—for instance, "Amy on the Stairway."

There are few Americans who do not understand English politics to the degree of recognizing the distinctive tendencies of Disraeli and Gladstone, and these cartoons from Punch brought together and offered to American book-buyers in this shape are likely to meet with the response due to their wit and humor. Some of them touch upon a crisis in our own history, and concerning the felicity and appropriateness of these there is likely to be some difference of opinion. It is easy to say what makes the book interesting, for to miss Disraeli's figure from the picture is almost invariably to find it commonplace. No element in English politics has been so original, vital, fruitful, so far as picturesqueness is concerned, as that which Disraeli introduced. Other leaders and politicians seem the mere dull slaves of their times in comparison, while he, even if he wore the garb of necessity and servitude, was sure to patch and adorn it with profuse gilt ornaments. To Americans a series of humorous cartoons like these should teach one lesson the essence of which we should lay to heart. With all the political animosity behind these attacks upon leaders of parties, with all the scorn, the flouting, the condemnation of contemporaries, nothing is ever alleged or suggested against the personal honesty, the individual integrity, of these men. All the inspiring facts and traditions connected with the government are left undebased by any association with trickery and wrong. "Chivalry," says Burke, "is the cheap defence of nations;" and not even Punch in his hardest thrusts at a weak point in his adversary's armor dares to insert a spear's point against his faithfulness and disinterestedness.

Mr. Read's spirited and patriotic poem, "The Wagoner of the Alleghanies," is well reproduced in this holiday edition, with designs by Hovenden, Harry Fenn, and others. Mr. Fenn's illustration of the wagoner,—

On many a dangerous mountain-track,
While oft the tempest burst its wreck,
When lightning, like his mad whip-lash,
Whirled round the team its crooked flash,
And horses reared in fiery fright,—

as also his

Vague as a vessel in a dream,

is exceedingly good, and Mr. Hovenden's firelight scene, which serves as the frontispiece, is very agreeably done.

Mr. Drake describes his volume entitled "Our Great Benefactors" as "an epitome of the world's work;" and he has certainly given brief biographies of upward of a hundred men and women. He has not, however, told us his rule of selection, except that he has admitted only those who may be considered benefactors for all time,—never merely local, but universal. We find Mrs. More and Robert Southey among his list of those eminent in literature and art, but not Wordsworth, Keats, or Shelley. Sir Christopher Wren is there, but not Michael Angelo; Hogarth, but not Raphael. It is, in fact, difficult to sum all truth in a single sentence or to put all truth in a nut-shell. Each of these sketches of great men and women is, however, accompanied by a portrait, surrounded in most cases by symbols illustrative either of their private history, their work, or their surroundings, Sir John Franklin, for example, appearing in an investiture of the aurora borealis, while around him are to be seen a wrecked boat among icebergs, dogs, and Esquimaux in snow-shoes.

A large volume, handsomely bound and superbly printed, with a title so attractive as "The Land of Rip Van Winkle," challenges attention and rouses the highest expectations. Such expensive processes, one would say, ought only to be set in operation by work of adequate value. And when the reader finds a trivial narrative of a so-called "pilgrimage," interspersed with hackneyed and questionable "traditions," and set off by designs that give but a feeble idea of the natural beauties of the Catskills, he is naturally disappointed. The merest sketch of the little house which bears the name of Rip Van Winkle is given, although the stone where he slept his long sleep is near by, and the entire locality is rich in opportunities for an artist who handles nature with feeling and dexterity. Haines's Falls are perhaps more adequately treated than any of the other subjects, but there is no effort made to give the unique and fairy-like charm of the endless succession of cascades that flash down the ravine below the main cataract. One cannot but suspect that many of the illustrations have already done duty in guide-books, for which service they are, at all events, best adapted. Their profusion will suffice

to recommend the book to persons of not too critical taste, whose acquaintance with the scenery is general rather than minute, and who may wish for some such memorial of a few days or weeks of summer travel.

There is something very fresh and genuine in Henry Timrod's poem of "Katie," in which the Southern lover of a little English girl who has crossed the seas finds her transforming by some magic all her American surroundings into what made the charm of her old home:

I meet her on the dusty street,
And daisies spring about her feet;
Or, touched to life beneath her tread,
An English cowslip lifts its head;
And, as to do her grace, rise up
The primrose and the buttercup.

The publishers have given the verses a dainty setting, with unpretentious illustrations of English fields and woods, and made it an attractive little holiday volume.

Juveniles.

"Last Fairy-Tales by Édouard Laboulaye." Authorized Translation, by Mary L. Booth. New York: Harper & Brothers.

"The Old-Fashioned Fairy-Book." By Mrs. Burton Harrison. Illustrated by Miss Rosina Emmet. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

"The Adventures of Prince Lazybones, and Other Stories." By Mrs. W. J. Hays. New York: Harper & Brothers.

"Queer Stories for Boys and Girls." By Edward Eggleston. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

"Stories in Rhyme for Holiday Time." By Edward Jewett Wheeler. Illustrated by Walter Satterlee. New York: Funk & Wagnalls.

"Indian History for Young Folks." By Francis S. Drake. New York: Harper & Brothers.

"Left Behind; or, Ten Days a Newsboy." By James Otis. New York: Harper & Brothers.

"Harper's Young People for 1884." New York: Harper & Brothers.

MANKIND forgets its benefactors only too easily, and nobody knows who invented our favorite fairy-tales; but one debt of gratitude we may pay, and that is to a writer like Laboulaye, who offers them anew to us so full of freshness, wit, and paradox that all the world is constrained to read them over again. "I should stand," he says in his preface, "a good chance of admission to the Academy

of Mother Goose, for I have her blood in my veins. I know what fairy-tales are." And he goes on to say, "The fairy-tale has no native land any more than it has an author. . . . The canvas is of no consequence; the embroidery is everything; and this embroidery changes with each century." Accordingly, he takes the tatters of some worn-out story, turns them inside out to discover some fresher and richer tints, cuts and refits, patches, seams, and ornaments, until this cast-off apparel of other generations not only delights our taste, but piques our intellectual sense as well. Other people's inventions do not burden him beyond his will; when he has taken enough, he flings the rest out of the window or puts it by for another time, and goes to work, combining, piecing out, and rearranging with a spontaneity and ease as refreshing as it is unexpected. There is never any jumble in his fairy-tales. Everything is vivid and life-like. One is led as if blindfold over the widest logical gaps. He is never forced to explain, being a veritable magician, from whom one expects wonders. His wit never tires. He never misses a chance of saying a good thing, and the opportunity for a delicate thrust at the fair sex never palls upon him. It would be difficult to decide which of the stories in this collection carries off the palm. Both "Fragolette" and "The Fairy Crawfish" are so good that it would be impossible for them to be surpassed, except by "Poor Hans," which is a diamond without a flaw. Miss Booth's translation is excellent, and few of the felicitous touches of the original are lost in the new setting.

Mrs. Burton Harrison's "Old-Fashioned Fairy-Book," attractive although it is, necessarily suffers by contrast with the breadth and strength, wit and humor, of a master of literary craft like Laboulaye. Her work is, nevertheless, far superior to the pretty exotic fantasies usually offered to the little folks under the name of fairy-tales. She is sure to have her subject well in hand, with an air of complete enjoyment in it herself, and carries her heroes and heroines through their eerie and weird experiences with delightful ease and spirit. To her fairy-stories old and new she has added some mediæval romances, condensed and transposed; but "Deep-Sea Violets" and "Rosy's Stay-at-Home Parties" are certain to be more popular with youthful readers. Miss Emmet's drawings are very pretty and very clever, and the cover of the

little volume is likely to fascinate all buyers.

"The Adventures of Prince Lazybones" does not seem to us to have the true fairy ring to it. The gnomes and elves impart information, they "leak wisdom," and none of the fairies talk like fairies we love to meet. There are several pleasant little stories in the pretty volume, all just bordering on the ideal world,—no doubt all very pleasant reading for uncritical readers, but very far from being the best.

"Stories in Rhyme for Holiday Time" is a handsomely-bound, well-printed, and very cleverly-illustrated volume in rhyme. The first verses, entitled "How the Sky Didn't Fall," borrows the leading idea from the old story of "Chicken Little." One of the tales relates how Cain and Abel in their infancy set out to find their rightful inheritance of Paradise, which their parents had forfeited. The whole book, both stories and designs, shows a fresh and nimble invention, and is likely to please.

Mr. Eggleston's "Queer Stories for Boys and Girls" have already found multitudes of readers in various periodicals, but now regathered in this shape will delight a new generation grown up in the interval since they were first published.

"Indian History for Young Folks" is not a volume calculated to inspire a tender and sentimental interest in the red man, but rather to revive old animosities and explain the old grudge we are beginning to forget against the race whose footsteps are toward the setting sun. It is a chronicle to shudder at, for all the old stories of unparalleled atrocities are there. They are told without exaggeration and without prejudice, and much of the responsibility is made to rest—as it should—upon the white man for his broken pledges, his spoliations, and his impatience of the proximity of an inferior people. But nevertheless the Indians were not comfortable neighbors. Interspersed with the bloody tales of massacres and tortures are pleasanter descriptions and narrations, with an occasional bit of humor, or what shows for humor in so grim a race. For instance, John Eliot, whose missionary labors among the Indians had such good results, established a court over which presided an Indian justice of the peace. His sagacious and sententious judgment in a case between some drunken Indians would do no discredit to a much higher civilization than that at Nonan-

tum. "Tie um all up," said he, "and whip um plaintiff, and whip um 'fendant, and whip um witness."

"Left Behind; or, Ten Days a News-boy" is one of those rose-colored accounts of youthful experience that deal with mysterious disappearances on the part of boys of tender age who leave their homes and go out to seek their fortunes. Little Paul, whose parents sail for Europe and leave him round the corner of the pier buying a top, is so fortunate as to find friends at once among newsboys and boot-blacks, who give him free lodging in a large packing-case, where they sleep, and initiate him into the secrets of their business, which is, we are glad to learn, a highly remunerative one. Paul's wish is, naturally, to make enough money to buy a ticket to Chicago, where his home is, the price at that date being fourteen dollars. How this sum was finally made up, and what the hero's adventures were, will naturally be a matter of lively interest to little readers.

A complete and charming panorama of child and animal life is disclosed as one turns the pages of the great bound volume of "Harper's Young People." Such dexterity and invention have gone to the illustrations that at first sight the text seems scarcely needed to convey ideas. Many of them tell their own story with a wit and a whim which leave nothing to be desired. But, the pictures once exhausted, the happy little possessor of this treasure-house will turn to the inexhaustible verse and story and find something, certainly bright, and perhaps wise, for every day in the year.

"A History of the United States of America." For the Use of Schools and Academies. With Maps and Illustrations. By Horace E. Scudder. Philadelphia: J. H. Butler.

THE author of the ideal school history will be not only a skilled writer but an experienced teacher, understanding from practice the needs and limitations of the school-room. Mr. Scudder's literary faculty stands in no need of recognition, and it has enabled him to construct, without descending to puerilities, a clear and simple narrative, intelligible to any bright child. Had he considered how little time can be devoted in most schools to United States history, he would perhaps have condensed a little more, and have omitted the "Topical Analyses" and "Questions for Examination," especially as these last are a form of assist-

ance from the author which no good teacher cares to receive. An aid to the text that will be more gratefully appreciated consists in the excellent maps by Mr. Wells, which illustrate every period of our history with a completeness that leaves nothing to be desired. The woodcuts are numerous, and some—as the portraits of Washington, Penn., and Longfellow—are far above the ordinary level of school-book illustrations. The only errors of fact that we have been able to discover are three slight inaccuracies of date in the chronology of the Revolution.

Books Received.

Money in Politics. By J. K. Upton. With an Introduction by Edward Atkinson. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co.

Montcalm and Wolfe. By Francis Parkman. Vol. II. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

Married Above Her. A Society Romance. By A Lady of New York. Philadelphia: T. B. Peterson & Brothers.

Bermuda: An Idyl of the Summer Islands. By Julia C. R. Dorr. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Poems of Sidney Lanier. Edited by his Wife. With a Memorial by William Hayes Ward. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Men of Invention and Industry. By Samuel Smiles, LL.D. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Custom and Myth. By Andrew Lang, M.A. New York: Harper & Brothers.

A Popular Treatise on the Law of Marriage and Divorce. By M. S. Robinson. Chicago: M. S. Robinson.

Pictures in Song. By Clinton Scollard. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Life of Mary Wollstonecraft. By Elizabeth Robins Pennell. Boston: Roberts Brothers.

Songs and Rhymes for the Little Ones. Compiled by Mary J. Morrison. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

The Making of a Man. (No Name Series.) Boston: Roberts Brothers.

Fresh Fields. By John Burroughs. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Ferishtah's Fancies. By Robert Browning. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

The Nutshell Series: Philosophy, Epigram and Epitaph, Wit and Humor, Proverbs, Wisdom, Sentiment. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons.